Chronicles

July 2002 A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE $3.95

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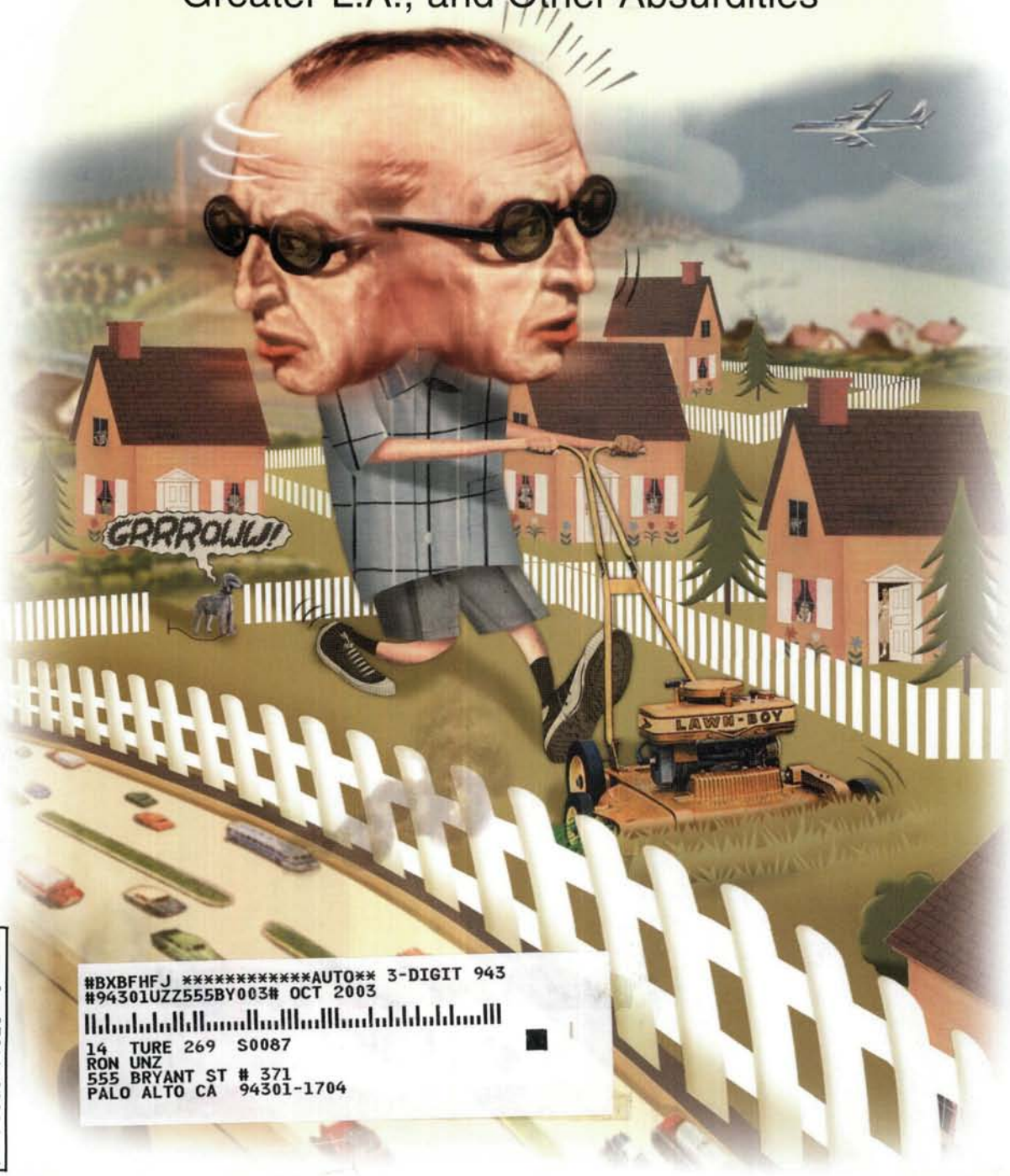

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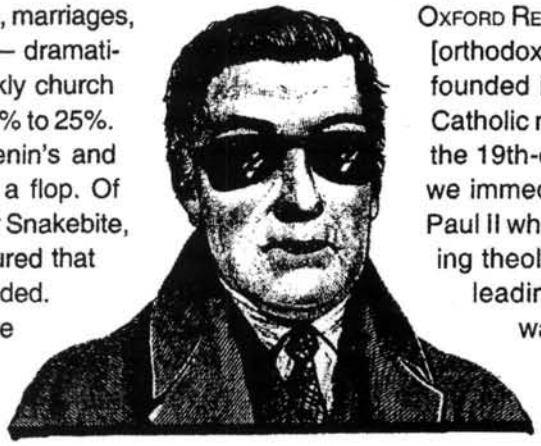
Since the 1960s, much of Catholicism has veered off in a revolutionary direction — its Marxism deriving as much from Groucho as from Karl — and in America the results are in: Two out of three Catholics don't believe in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. The number of priests, brothers, sisters, Catholic schools, seminaries, baptisms, marriages, and conversions has declined — dramatically in certain cases. And weekly church attendance has dropped from 70% to 25%. The Catholic revolution, like Lenin's and Castro's revolutions, has been a flop. Of course Father Flapdoodle, Sister Snakebite, and Bishop Bubbles haven't figured that out — they think the 60s never ended. Still trying to be cool cats, they're *so cool* they're frozen in a time warp.



But mercifully, God's frozen people are thawing out. Where's the fire and intelligence in the Church today? Among traditional Catholics! The dioceses that have no vocations shortage, the religious orders that are growing, and the seminaries that are packed are predominantly the traditional ones. And traditional Catholics have been founding *new* colleges and seminaries. Polls show that the Catholics most committed to the Church are traditional Catholics. Seminarians and younger priests are much more traditional than middle-aged and older priests. The only novel idea in Catholic education is home-schooling, spearheaded by traditional Catholics. The only massive grassroots movement in the Church is the prolife movement, led by traditional Catholics. The only significant Catholic presence on TV is the ardently traditional EWTN. The only significant Catholic voice on radio is that of traditional Catholics.

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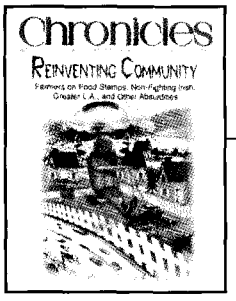

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Chronicles
A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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On the Clear and Present Danger

Scott P. Richert's article on the Islamic school in Rockford ("Through a Glass, Darkly," *The Rockford Files*, April), was extremely tasteful—and also very disturbing.

There are several Islamic private schools here in Washington, D.C. The *Washington Post* did a story on the phenomenon a couple of years ago, listing some of the same selling points that Mr. Richert did, explaining why many Christians (mostly, I suspect, in name only) send their children there—the discipline, the structure, and the academic emphasis. There are other reasons as well. Many parents either waited too late to get their children into the private school of their first choice, couldn't afford their first choice, or got a sudden case of indigestion when they realized how bad the public schools really had become.

I feel quite sure, however, that most parents who send their youngsters to the Islamic schools didn't do the kind of homework that Mr. Richert did. It's not as if one has to stay on school grounds for weeks and weeks, after all, to uncover what he did. Nothing was hidden. It was mostly out there in the open, as are many of the problems with the public schools.

As I wrote in a piece last year ("School Days," *Vital Signs*, January 2001), I went to an honest-to-goodness nonsectarian, multicultural school (diplomats' kids, etc.) in Washington, D.C. It enrolled not only Muslims but Hindus, Jews, Catholics, Protestants, and probably children of some other faiths I wasn't aware of. Nevertheless, we all said the Lord's Prayer in three languages every morning and saluted the American flag. Nobody opted out—or wanted to. We had a Christmas pageant every year at one of the area churches, and all of the parents, regardless of faith or country of origin, sat there grinning from ear-to-ear as we walked solemnly down the aisle singing about the Christ Child and the Virgin Mary. Although we did not repeat or study any Jewish, Muslim, or Hindu prayers, I can't recall a single incident of disrespect or bullying over ethnicity or religion.

In pre-1960 America, every parent and student accepted that Christianity and patriotism were "givens" in the United States, even as people were free to worship in other ways and to retain loyalties to other countries (dual citizenship, for example). How tragic that this all suddenly became so problematic.

I can't help wondering, especially after reading Mr. Richert's excellent piece, if a lot of the angst hasn't been hastened by factions determined to create a divisiveness, an us-against-them mentality in the name of diversity. After a while, that mentality becomes a "given," too, which sets people up to wreak all kinds of havoc in the name of an agenda they neither sanction nor understand.

That's what appears to be happening in the case of the Rockford Iqra School. The "American Christian" (as one child put it) who attends no doubt is an intelligent youngster, but malleable and vulnerable even so, in need of someone capable of channeling his energies and focusing his thoughts. That is why U.S. educators and parents once prized concepts such as "structure" and "mental discipline." Unfortunately, the unsuspected enemies in our midst now appear to be capitalizing on our change of heart.

—B.K. Eakman
Washington, D.C.

Having been relatively sheltered on the southeast side of Rockford, imagine my surprise when I learned that an Islamic academy resides within two miles of my home. Shocked? Yes. Indignant? Definitely. I certainly appreciate the wake-up call, however. Not only does this article open my eyes to the influence the Muslim community has within Rockford, it gives me an inkling of what we as Christians may expect from a city (and a nation) that discards its traditions in the name of diversity. This infiltration of sorts is very unsettling. Nevertheless, what disturbs me most about this school is not so much what is being taught as who is doing the teaching. I am very disappointed that Christian teachers have such slight regard for their Faith and their duty to present the truth, but I can't say that I'm surprised. It is proof of a closing of the mind to the past, and it is much more dangerous than the call to open it to the future. No good Muslim would either seek or be sought for a position within a Christian school, so why are these teachers daring such a compromising po-

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sition? No doubt the rigid structure and support system are very alluring, as many other schools at present can hardly boast of any solid sense of order. This article was definitely a call to arms, and I am amazed to find myself forced to take up a defensive position rather than an offensive one. We must bring these teachers back to our schools, reintegrating the organization and common sense lost when this country forfeited its religious, literary, and educational traditions. We must give them something to come back to and remind them of their duty to God, their country, and their children.

—Bethany Lewis
Rockford, IL

By Mr. Richert's description, the Islamic school in Rockford seems to be yet another trivial and small replica of a myriad of similar "educational" centers all over France and the European Union. His value-free narrative about the Islamic mindset however, leaves me with the impression that he may be incognizant of this alien influence within Western culture.

I hope that Mr. Richert, despite his surplus of politeness, knows what the stakes are. Instead of focusing on the exotic Islamic curriculum, shouldn't we raise the question as to who really allowed this fifth column into the United States of America? Muslim aliens should not be scorned for their valiant incursions into America. Rather, it is the masochistic, guilt-ridden Christians themselves, and particularly the Catholic clergy, who bear prime responsibility for future interreligious and interracial warfare. The Christian "love thy neighbor" fake conviviality is bound to bring untold misery to the European Union and the United States of America. Muslims in Rockford are only peacefully conducting cultural war over terrain that has been prepared over decades by spineless gentiles and their secular leftist "human rights" offshoots.

—Tomislav Sunic
Croatia

I think the article by Scott P. Richert is a disgrace. The article showed your fear of Islam and your lack of an answer to it. Jesus spoke of the Prophet Muhammad and his coming. God said in the Koran that he sealed the eyes and ears of some people. For them, understanding of Islam will never come because God has sealed their eyes and ears. Whomever God has led cannot be led astray; whomever God has left cannot be led. How sad to be left behind—to be a sheep regurgitating what your parents taught, following the flock, because that is what one does in Rockford, Illinois.

—Unsigned
Kansas City, MO

As a concerned parent of a student of Rockford Iqra School, I would like to bring to your attention the biased and prejudiced article published in your magazine. The author writes as if no one has visited our school and center before. The mosque is open to one and all. There are open houses, and people of all faiths frequently visit the center. If there were something to hide, the school or the community center would never have given permission in the first place for your journalists to come in. We trust the people who visit us, or else the children would not have been allowed to be interviewed. What if someone went to a local public/private school and interviewed kids, only to twist and turn the answers to mean something else? The children will not trust anyone. The writer has written lies making false connections at many places.

Also, he seems to have no religious tolerance or any respect for those trying to learn about all faiths. We try to learn about Christianity and Judaism, and so do other people about Islam. He calls three Christian boys who came in to ask questions about Islam "grungers." We have many such people that come in frequently. We respect all and do not call people names. What if I visited some local churches? People who visit us highly appreciate our hospitality and are in awe, especially when they visit the mosque. Some have accepted Islam, too, not because of force but because they realize this is the same religion of Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad (peace be on them all). If such were the case, we would not have highly educated, pious Christian teachers at our school.

America is a country of religious tolerance and freedom. There are Christian churches, Jewish synagogues, Hindu temples, Buddhist temples, and Muslim mosques in this country. All add to the immense glory and rich past, present, and future of America. Muslims are law-abiding, tax-paying citizens like the Christian and Jewish citizens of this country.

For the reasons listed above, I would like this article to be withdrawn immediately. I do not give permission for any further propagation of this article.

—Asmina Ali
Rockford, IL

Scott P. Richert's article is *full of broken truth and, at times, utter lies.*

A few instances are:

1. Iqra School is affiliated with the Iqra Foundation (lie).

2. Muslim *rap is not taught at this school.* Songs were downloaded from the internet *and interwoven in the article,* making it seem that a nine- or ten-year-old was taught these songs (lie).

3. Walk in *a library* and you see some books by *an author* and you assume an affiliation of the *library and the author!* You extend this further and trace the author's one million donations. Out of this million donations, a few *donations may be by another "X" person.* Now you try to link this "X" person with the author and thus the library. *Lame and folly.* (The author tried to link the community library to Ahmad Deedat and to Osama bin Laden and Iqra School.)

4. Zaid wants to memorize the Koran *while excelling in his academics.* He has loftier academic goals than his two doctor parents. I do not find anything wrong with this, and so would any sensible person [*sic*].

5. Moreover, Zaid's parents did not move to Rockford for Zaid to join Iqra School. An utter lie. Zaid did not say this. *Two doctors with two professions moving from Grayling, Michigan, to Rockford for Iqra School!* Don't you think Mr. Richert is getting a little too carried away and beyond common sense?

6. There are even instances of *slander* in regards to other kids and their parents.

7. More than 50 *percent of the teaching staff is Christian.* If there were any biased teaching, these teachers would have knowledge of this.

There is *animosity and hatred from the start. The introduction* to the article, (before Mr. Richert even arrives at the school) *delineates his despise* [*sic*], surprise, and how the *idea of a Muslim population is inconceivable* [*sic*]. It *concludes with outright blasphemy.* There is twisted truth and *lies between this introduction and conclusion.* Why?

Muslims have *no grudge* against Christians. On the contrary, *we love you all* from the deepest recesses of our heart *just like Jesus* (pbuh) [peace be upon him—ed.] taught and *Muhammad* (pbuh) reinforced this love. Mr. Richert *brews with*

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spite as he drives back. He is *angry at the very presence of an Islamic school* and considers its existence a *failure of nerve on the part of Christians*. His *religious intolerance seeps in his comments* as he depicts one mosque in Rome.

Through sewn lips my heart outcries as I ruminate on the gist of the article. *Truth has been molested, and the trust of the innocent children betrayed.* I cannot drown these heart-ripping comments by turning to music. *Tears roll down my eyes as the author talks about love on one hand and blasphemizes* [*sic*] *a prophet in the next sentence, calling him a ravening wolf.*

I beg and pray and cry before the ONE Lord of Jesus, Moses, and of Muhammad (peace be upon them) and the sole creator of the worlds to sift the darkness of souls, soften the hatred of ignorant minds and shine on us the light of truth and trust.

—A Parent
Rockford Iqra School

Mr. Richert Replies:

As readers can see, the reaction to my article has been quite varied. When I appeared on a local radio talk show, one caller accused me of being "pro-Muslim"; later, when I was a guest on the Tom Clark Show on Wisconsin Public Radio, several callers accused me of being "anti-Muslim." I have been told by professors of religious studies that my article was "more than fair" and that it might make a good recruiting tool for the Rockford Iqra School, and the cofounder of an organization for Christian-Islamic dialogue (a former Muslim who is now a Catholic) gently chided me for not condemning the violent language in the Muslim rap that I cited. And both Christians and Muslims have accused me of spreading "intolerance" and "hatred."

In other words, various people seem to have read into my article whatever they were looking for, much as Asmina Ali and "A Parent" accuse me of doing when I visited the school. Mrs. Eakman's kind letter reflects her concerns about the destruction of public and private education in the United States over the past half-century, while Tomislav Sunic's remarks are precisely what I would expect from a dispirited, fallen-away Catholic who is looking to neopaganism to undo the damage that he believes has been wrought by "masochistic, guilt-ridden Christians." (While I don't agree with his solution, Dr. Sunic is right to blame American Christians for the growth of Islam in the United States. As I wrote in my article, the very presence of an Islamic school in Rockford "is as much an indication of a failure of nerve on the part of Christians as is the more visible mosque that has been erected in Rome.") And "Unsigned" accuses me of being a "sheep regurgitating what your parents taught, following the flock," presumably because I don't believe what his parents taught. For instance, when he claims that "Jesus spoke of the Prophet Muhammad and his coming," he undoubtedly has in mind John 16:7 ("Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you"), which Christians have always believed refers to the Holy Spirit (see John 14:26: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you").

When the April issue appeared, I sent several copies of it to Principal Atteya Elnoory and told him that we would be happy to publish a response. To date, the closest thing we have received is a packet of 14 letters (of which Asmina Ali's was one), forwarded by a local law firm, which demanded that we remove pictures of students from the version of the article on *Chronicles*' website, even though we had obtained permission through the school to take pictures and to publish them. (We did not interview, nor take pictures of, any students whose parents did not grant permission in advance.)

"A Parent" claims that my article is "full of broken truth and, at times, utter lies." He lists three: (1) "Iqra School is affiliated with the Iqra Foundation." My source for this was a *Chicago Tribune* article from November 25, 2001 (*www.chicagotribune.com/search/chi0111250380nov25.story*). As Aaron Wolf and I were leaving the school, we verified this fact with Principal Elnoory, in the presence of school-board chairman Dr. Khalid Siddiqui. (2) "Muslim rap is not taught at this school." I never claimed it was. The children, however, sang a Muslim rap to me, said that they had memorized it for a talent show, and told me that I could buy a copy of the tape at the Iqra Educational Foundation's bookstore in Chicago. The first song on that tape, which at least two of the students said they owned, is the one that they sang. The very next song is "Jihad of the Nafs," whose violent lyrics I did download from the internet. (3) "Zaid's parents did not move to Rockford for Zaid to join Iqra School. . . . Zaid did not say this." Actually, Zaid *did* say this, as my notes and Aaron Wolf can confirm. Still, I am puzzled by the objection. My point in mentioning it (as well as in mentioning Zaid's desire to memorize the whole Koran) was to illustrate the depth of commitment that the students and their families have to both the Rockford Iqra School and to their religion, a depth of commitment that most Christians today, sadly, lack. The only way "A Parent" could reasonably think that I was attacking Zaid or his family would be if "A Parent" thought memorizing the Koran or moving one's family to enroll one's children in the school was intrinsically wrong.

The closest "A Parent" comes to a valid criticism of my article is when he accuses me of trying "to link the community library to Ahmed Deedat and to Osama bin Laden and Iqra School." The fact that I have copies of *The Communist Manifesto*, *Mein Kampf*, the *Book of Mormon*, and the Koran on my bookshelf at home does not mean that I endorse the ideas found in any of them. But I simply reported on what Aaron Wolf and I found in the library, and I let the reader draw his own conclusions. The only person to mention Osama bin Laden during our visit to the school was Dr. Siddiqui, the chairman of the board, and again, I leave it to the reader to determine whether his remarks constitute praise.

Finally, speaking of Dr. Siddiqui, I feel compelled to quote, in full, the letter that his wife, Dr. Sabet Siddiqui, sent in the packet from the law firm: "This is a notice to withdraw immediately any permission on our behalf and rescind any article, pertaining to Zaid, Zafar, and Sariya Siddiqui. You are asked to specifically [*sic*] remove any picture, any excerpts from the interview, and the article itself from the website; and also any future publication or propagation arising out of the visit to Rockford Iqra School by Scott P. Richert in April 2002 issue of *Chronicles*." During our visit, Dr. Siddiqui assured Aaron and myself that Americans should not fear the imposition of Islamic law (*sharia*), because, in his words, "If you look at the Constitution, it is a pure Islamic document." If the letter from his wife is any indication, however, the Bill of Rights apparently is not.

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CHILD MOLESTATION has been much in the news in the past few months, and as always in such debates, the issue of homosexuality is never far from the surface. For decades, conservative activists have argued that homosexual behavior is closely related to molestation and pedophilia, so that tolerating homosexuals ultimately endangers children. According to the slogan, "Homosexuals aren't born, they recruit." Homosexual activists angrily deny these charges.

Recently, though, the substance of the debate has changed significantly, as the homosexual rebuttal has become much more aggressive. As expressed in op-ed pieces and talk shows across the country, a new liberal orthodoxy not only denies the gay/pedophile link but explicitly charges that pedophiles are virtually always heterosexual, even when they victimize boys. When pressed on this point, activists respond that this is something that "studies have shown." In fact, studies have shown no such thing, and only one significant study has even claimed to prove such a point. What we have here is a classic example of a popular myth drawn from the misinterpretation of social science.

The legend grew out of an article in *Pediatrics* magazine in 1994 by Carole Jenny, Thomas Roesler, and Kimberly J. Poyer, who wrote a study entitled "Are children at risk for sexual abuse by homosexuals?" Based on an examination of 352 young children who had been diagnosed as sexually abused, the authors answered that question with a resounding "No." In only two of these cases was the perpetrator clearly a homosexual—a homosexual man and a lesbian, respectively. Overall, the authors found that the children studied "were unlikely to have been molested by identifiably gay or lesbian people." As the study entered popular discourse, however, the claims based on it expanded somewhat, to boast that pedophiles were virtually never homosexuals. In this case, it was necessary to determine why *hetero*sexuals were so likely to abuse: Just what kind of pathology followed from that deeply unnatural state? I have not yet seen the further claim that "heterosexuals recruit"—but it should not be too far down the road.

Unfortunately, the famous "Jenny Study" is deeply flawed, at least in what it can possibly tell us about any linkage between homosexuality and molestation. The problems of the study should be immediately apparent from the sample used. Reviewing their cases, the authors found 269 children who had clearly been abused by adults, including 219 girls and 50 boys. Right there, we know there is something wrong, since no study of molestation victims has ever suggested such a large disparity between the sexes. Probably as many boys as girls are victims of abuse, and the hospitals and clinics used by Jenny and the others *must* have been disproportionately treating female victims, while missing boys. Many reasons can be suggested for this fact—perhaps the doctors referring children were better able to recognize abuse in girls, perhaps parents were more sensitive to the dangers faced by their daughters—but whatever the reasons, the boys are lacking. Since men are far more likely to abuse than women, this logically means that the sample is also ignoring the men who abused these boys. If men abuse little girls, we call them "heterosexual pedophiles"; if men abuse little boys, we call them "homosexual pedophiles." By definition, the study is simply failing to detect a large number of homosexual pedophiles, a type of deviant that undoubtedly does exist.

Though this logic seems unassailable to me, it would not be accepted by Jenny *et al.*, whose article is frankly presented as a polemical contribution to political debates over homosexual rights. Even in the cases in which men clearly abused boys, the authors still deny that this act involved any element of homosexuality. In their view, the term "homosexual" (or "lesbian") can only be applied to individuals who are clearly and identifiably "out": It reflects social status rather than behavior. With such an incredibly narrow definition, and such a flawed sample to begin with, it is remarkable that Jenny and Co. were prepared to admit the possibility of any homosexual misconduct with minors occurring at all.

Based on the Jenny Study, we can say absolutely nothing positive or negative about any possible association between homosexuality and child molestation. My impression of the evidence accumulated over the years is that there is no terribly direct linkage either way, that homosexuals are neither more nor less likely than heterosexuals to molest. A desire to avoid false charges against homosexuals, however, should not lead us to the opposite extreme, to favor an exoneration that is ultimately derived from deeply flawed social science. If you ever hear the "Jenny Legend" in the media, recognize what it is, and be prepared to confront it.

—*Philip Jenkins*

PUBLIC-SCHOOL FINANCE, as a topic of concern, reminds us that the egalitarian impulse lives on imperishably. Mankind must be hard-wired to scratch the ears of the perceived—generally self-defined—underdog, before siccing him on the perceived top dog.

Public schools, financed with public monies, were probably overdue their share of the action; but, boy, are they catching up.

Consider this tidbit several months back from the *Dallas Morning News*: "The Highland Park Independent School District asked parents and community members this month to raise $900,000 in individual contributions to pay for a 3 percent teacher raise. The fund-raiser may be the first time a Texas school district has used donations to pay for a core element of its operating budget, state school finance authorities say. Under the state's [property tax] recapture system, the Highland Park district is required to send $52.5 million from its 2001-02 budget for redistribution to poorer districts."

The district's plight—which has worsened in recent months—stems from a financial whammy put on "property wealthy" districts a few years ago at the behest of "property poor" districts seeking bigger bucks. First, in 1993, the Texas Supreme Court found the school-finance system—the normal mix of state and local dollars, though with the state share in decline—unconstitutional. Legal and political maneuvers ensued. At length, with Supreme Court approval, a brand-new system emerged, known as "Robin Hood." No legislative act was ever more appropriately dubbed. It robs the "rich" and gives to the "poor." Why? Don't ask silly questions. Because the "rich" are rich, and the "poor" are poor.

Oh—and because the "poor" tend to outvote the "rich": meaning it's very, very

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hard to palliate such a situation.

With hardly any effort at all, you could forget that the whole affray centers, supposedly, on education. The idea behind Robin Hood is the equalization of educational opportunity through the equalization of wealth. The idea overrides competing considerations, such as the right to the use the resources you have, with some effort and foresight, managed to amass. Wherever you got your money, you can be relied on to supply more.

Well, can't you?

Not so easily as it might seem. Highland Park—I am honor-bound to note that I have lived in the district for 28 years, and that both my children were educated there—has the money to give the teachers their raise; but, under Robin Hood, pressures increase yearly, as the law forbids a district to tax more than $1.50 per $100 of assessed valuation. Already giving away 50 to 60 percent of locally raised revenues, the "wealthy" districts must give more and more as property values continue to rise. The more they make, the more they lose. Ah, sweet land of liberty!

In the spring, Highland Park, 99 percent of whose graduates go to college, announced faculty cuts for the fall. Districts with considerably fewer resources than the original 51 "donor" districts worried as they approached donor status themselves. A select committee of legislators and citizens is investigating remedies.

The state legislature is believed incapable of action before its 2005 session. But, then, what if it were ready now? Would it rise to smite the thief of Sherwood? Since the legislature loosed the thief in the first place, this seems unlikely; unlikelier still, given the way legislative leaders define the problem as a "shortage of tax revenues." Everyone knows what we do to cope with a scarcity of tax revenue: We raise taxes. It would take a constitutional amendment to enact a state income tax, but just such an effort is surely forthcoming, despite the lugubrious and certainly counterproductive consequences of such a move.

Or is that looking at the matter through the wrong lens? Education may not be the point here. The point may be just plain old leveling; leveling for the hell of it, with the excuse of "improving" education, sure, but leveling in the main because the leveler, looking out on the unlevel ranks of humanity, is traditionally shocked. He doesn't like it. He wants to change it.

What annoys levelers sometimes even more than pecuniary inequalities is mental and intellectual ones. If the good Lord gave all men and women equal intellectual powers and equal supplies of git-up-and-git, He has kept it a deep dark secret. The creed of the leveler is that lack of "opportunity" accounts for inequalities. Smooth out the opportunities, and we've got it made. The notion has been field-tested in the Gulag and—another kind of prison—the public schools, but somehow things don't quite work out. Quotas, the downgrading of standards, and the redistribution of resources are strongly indicated answers.

We're instructed these days to avoid irony, but it keeps popping up anyway. The sublime educational irony is that the public schools were conceived as a leveling institution—and not entirely for ignoble reasons, be it said. (The state saw a duty in the nurture of the unnurtured.)

Today, no small number of public schools—maybe a majority—show themselves adept at leveling or minimizing intellectual achievement. Yet it's not enough, somehow. With more money—tax money, naturally—the levelers could pay back the aspiring and talented for the social crime of exhibiting aspiration and talent. Which might fix the public schools once and for all, because then no one would attend them but those singled out by the state for uplift. *Ex malo bonum*, as the old saying goes.

—*Bill Murchison*

JUDGE DANNY BOGGS of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit is, for believers in the rule of law, a hero. Judge Boggs, in an extraordinary dissenting opinion published in May, revealed profound problems with the majority of his court's approach to law in an affirmative-action case and pointed out that his chief judge manipulated the make-up of the court that was deciding the case, in order to reach the result that the chief judge desired.

At issue was the University of Michigan Law School's policy of according preferences to members of certain "races," most commonly African-Americans and Hispanics, ostensibly in order to achieve "diversity" in the law school's student body. The problem is that the U.S. Constitution, in the 14th Amendment, forbids any state from depriving any person of the "equal protection of the laws," and the Supreme Court has declared that classification of citizens on racial grounds by the state is a deprivation of equal protection, unless it is done to promote a "compelling state interest." No one knows what a "compelling state interest" is, although, in this particular context, the Supreme Court has suggested that one might be the remedying of past instances of racial discrimination. The University of Michigan Law School had argued, however, that its policy of preferring members of favored minority groups over others was justified not because of past discrimination, but because of the goal of promoting "diversity," which, it further argued, ought to count as a "compelling state interest."

The Supreme Court, however, has never held that promoting "diversity" is a "compelling state interest," although Justice Lewis Powell, in one case, had opined that diversity might be one. Powell's opinion, as Boggs pointed out, was what lawyers call "dicta"—that is, a gratuitous pronouncement not necessary for the holding in the case. That didn't stop the majority in the Sixth Circuit from following Powell in this case, even though the lower court and one other federal circuit court had quite properly refused to accept Powell's opinion as binding. Worse, even Powell's opinion had held that, when following a "compelling state interest," the state had to tailor its racial discriminations in a manner that fulfilled the purpose at hand but did not, under any circumstances, involve racial "quotas."

The University of Michigan Law School argued that, while it did set aside a number of places for favored minorities, these should not be regarded as quotas but as a minimum "critical mass." In the words of the majority opinion, there would be a rough number sufficient "to ensure under-represented minority students do not feel isolated or like spokespersons for their race, and do not feel uncomfortable discussing issues freely based on their personal experiences." The majority bought this weird argument, but Judge Boggs nicely pointed out that, in practice, there was no real difference between "quotas" and "critical masses."

Exposing the quite dubious legal holding of the majority was a service, but the real heroism came from Boggs's detailing in a Procedural Appendix, how his court's chief judge had manipulated the panel initially dealing with the case, as

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well as the eventual hearing by all of the sitting judges. In particular, the chief judge, who wrote the majority's opinion, had arranged the timing of the hearing to exclude two judges whom the chief judge believed to be hostile to the supposed constitutionality of the affirmative-action plan. In effect, he guaranteed the result he wanted, since the addition of these two would have meant that there would have been a majority of judges who doubted the constitutionality of the law school's scheme.

Predictably, Judge Boggs' revelation of this chicanery caused an outcry. One of his colleagues in the majority complained that Judge Boggs' appendix suggested that "the judges of this court manipulate and ignore the rules in order to advance political agendas" and that this would "severely undermine public confidence in this court." Boggs' succinct reply was that "Legitimacy protected only by our silence is fleeting. If any damage has been done to the court, it is the work of the actors, not the reporters."

Just so. At a time when the party controlling the U.S. Senate is determined not to allow judges to be confirmed unless they possess the requisite "judicial ideology"—namely, a preference for particular judicial outcomes dictated by that same majority—it is helpful to be reminded that the law is supposed to be objective and not simply the result of power politics. There is still hope while such men as Judge Boggs remain on the bench.

—Stephen B. Presser

RUSSIAN SECURITY is threatened in the east as well as in the south and west (through NATO expansion). In an interview in Moscow's elite-oriented *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* on April 25, Prof. Vilya Gelbras of Moscow State University's Asia and Africa Institute called Russia's East Siberia and Far East regions the "weakest link" in the "system" of Russian "state security."

That's quite a claim for a country fighting a bloody war with Muslim "holy warriors" in Chechnya. In fact, Moscow is threatened with the expansion of Islamic radicalism all along its southern border, from Central Asia to Georgia. Nevertheless, Gelbras claims that the ongoing depopulation of Russia (about a million people per year), especially in Siberia and the Far East, combined with the burgeoning population of a dynamic, aggressive China, represents the chief long-term threat to Russian security.

The region is simply being overrun by illegal Chinese immigrants, a reflection of the huge population disparity in the Russian-Chinese border regions and of the market for cheap consumer goods in the poverty-stricken Russian hinterlands. (Most Chinese illegals are traders or work in small-scale production, often owned and operated by their fellow countrymen, according to Russian media sources.) China, with over one billion people, has a population of 106 million in the lengthy, largely unguarded Russian border region, while Russian demographers report a sparse seven to eight million Russians in the same area. On top of that, Gelbras maintains that the total number of unemployed and partially employed people in China "exceeds the entire [population] of Russia."

Unlike Russia, which, according to Gelbras, lacks a long-term strategy for developing the area in question, Beijing has plans for the vast Siberia/Far East region, which is rich in mineral resources, oil, and gas. Gelbras sees China using "economic means" (making the region dependent on Chinese labor and trade) and mass migration to absorb it. Thus, the region, which lacks an integrated transportation system and remains remote from European Russia, will gradually become "detached" from the Russian Federation.

This should sound familiar to Americans and Europeans. The same economic and demographic forces threaten the long-term security of both, with Muslim and Latin American states adopting tactics similar to those of the Chinese: Shift unemployed, growing populations to the North, make *El Norte* dependent on cheap labor and trade ties to the South, and gradually absorb them into the South's sphere of influence. "Direct threats," as Professor Gelbras noted, are not needed.

Meanwhile, Russia has become a transit point for illegal migration from Africa and Asia to Europe, with Russian border authorities hampered by a lack of funding and rampant corruption. (Does this ring a bell with those familiar with the situation in the U.S. Border Patrol?)

Russia is attached to the West not only by its Christian heritage and shared cultural attributes but by the very fact of its status as a "developed" nation—one whose defining core population (Russians and other Eastern Slavs) is declining and whose industrial base is disappearing, even as migrants from vastly different nations and cultures fill in the black hole left by the country's dissolution. The only difference is that the Russians have the excuse of being poor—Western states have the means, but not the will, apparently, to defend their own borders.

Can the West, especially Washington, stop treating Moscow as an enemy long enough to develop some system for cooperating against the common problems we both face? Can Russian elites stop looting their country long enough to develop a credible mechanism for cooperation? That, regrettably, remains an open question.

—Denis Petrov

OBITER DICTA: Our poetry this month is provided by **Robert Beum**, who resides in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Dr. Beum's poems and essays have appeared in the *Sewanee Review*, *National Review*, the *Christian Century*, *Prairie Schooner*, and the *Southwest Review*, among others. His most recent books are *Classic European Short Stories* and *Modern British Essayists*.

Our art this month is provided by **Jeff Drew** of Albuquerque, New Mexico. Mr. Drew, who originally hails from Indiana, is a software developer specializing in computer graphic design.

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by Thomas Fleming

Deracinated Americans

It was a late night in the small-town pizzeria, and the owners were sitting at our table drinking the Antinori Chianti *riserva* that was "too sour" for the local Swedes, who prefer Lambrusco on the rocks when they are not drinking Miller Lite. The husband had come from Italy as a child, but his wife was an authentic "SaudaRoccafoda" Italian, who had grown up in the shadow of "St. Anthony's" steeple. She was telling me stories, similar to what I had heard from other exiles, about the old neighborhood.

Growing up, she had known practically everyone, had navigated the complicated networks of kin and marriage that connected the houses and streets of South Rockford more securely than telephone lines and water mains could ever do. On hot summer afternoons, she and the other children had sucked on the *granite* they bought at the Italian market, and her family, when it was not dining at home or in the houses of uncles and cousins, had gone out to Maria's for the famous pizza and the more famous steaks. If you were well connected, you could order dishes that never appeared on the menu. You had to know—and be known. This was the turf of Illinois Rep. Zeke Giorgi—"Uncle Zeke" literally to hundreds, and figuratively to thousands, of Rockford Italians.

Their part of South Rockford had been, like so many Italian immigrant neighborhoods, a community unto itself, and other ethnic groups were well-advised not to penetrate too deeply into the Sicilian heartland. The gangs left St. Anthony's and Maria's alone, if they knew what was good for them, and despite (or, rather, because of) the presence of at least one of the five families, the neighborhood was a bastion of safety for the residents. But the close-knit fabric of Italian community life quickly began to unravel in the 1960's. The despised Italians, whom the Anglos and Swedes had kept out of jobs on the East Side, were graduating from college and earning legal and medical degrees; they owned businesses and were making good money. South Rockford began to feel like the Italian ghetto; the suburbs represented the America that no Italian had discovered. And, even if they wanted to stay, the civil-rights movement was making it difficult to maintain the frontier. Only a bigot would object to diversity, they were told, but, in their hearts, they knew that only unnatural parents would want to rear their children in an atmosphere polluted by drugs, violence, and crime.

"We all lived together in those days," she explained, and she and her sisters could walk across the street to see their grandmother or down the block to visit aunts and uncles. "We had everything to make us happy, and yet we left it all—for what?—or let ourselves get driven out by the gangs. We thought we were moving up into a better world for our children. In fact, we lost everything." Now, to appreciate South Rockford, you have to look at the photography displays at the Festa Italiana or attend an event sponsored by the Columbus Day Committee, which is valiantly trying to keep alive a sense of Italian heritage.

Naive conservatives (not just the conservatives who shill for developers) speak of the suburbs as the fulfillment of the American dream, but, for most people, they were a *cul de sac* where all traditions of community were destroyed. Now we live in a country of suburbanites who do not have the faintest conception of what life might have been like in places like South Rockford or the Polish East End of Superior, Wisconsin, or old Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina. They do not know what they are missing, but they miss it, nonetheless. Man is not born to live among faceless people who barricade themselves to watch TV in houses picked out of a developer's plan book. Man must find meaning in everything he does, or else he goes mad or dies. Too many Americans are turning into the living dead, more terrifyingly dead than the creatures of George Romero's tawdry nightmares.

A community is not a suburban house that can be built on spec and sold to a young couple who view it as a tax write-off to be resold as soon as their combined incomes make it possible to trade up. If a man is eager to trade up the family home, why should he be reluctant, once he is making the money, to trade up his wife and family?

Christians quite properly loathed King Henry VIII as a philandering adulterer, but if Henry had the good fortune to live in California, his serial monogamy would be regarded as proof of his attachment to the institution of marriage. A man might dally, when he is young, and still make a good husband, but a man who has lived with a series of women, in or out of wedlock, can never be true to any woman. He has seen too much, done too much, and we who have lived in too many towns and fixed up too many houses and fit into too many new groups can never be fully loyal. In the back of our minds, we know we can always move on if things do not work out as we had hoped.

A community is not a mirage that keeps on disappearing over the horizon; it is more like a home, "the place where when you have to go there, they have to take you in," as Robert Frost says, the place "one somehow doesn't have to deserve." If we are among the lucky few in modern America, we are born into a community. If we are not, we may fall into one by accident and may even, after long residence, be accepted as resident aliens, especially after our children are born in the village. "Your children will belong here," a friend told me in McClellanville, South Carolina (population, perhaps, 500), "but you never will." That was a year before we moved to a place to which neither I nor my children will ever quite belong.

Community means, primarily, a commonality, a place and a people who live and work together, where children are born and play in the shadow of their ancestors' tombstones. Members of a community accept one another, warts and all, much as parents are willing to endure their ne'er-do-well children (sometimes preferring them to more successful but less dependent offspring), so long as they are loyal to the family. A community is not made up of individuals who "choose" to live in a place that suits their fancy but of families who are part of the common life, whether they want to be or not. I remember a couple who had left our village to avoid some gossip, but after a few

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years had passed and the stories had faded into the background, they moved back and picked up their end of the threads that were inextricably tangled in the common skein.

A society, on the other hand, does consist of individuals (usually men) who have banded together to pursue some purpose, even if that purpose is only a pleasure. Football teams, joint stock companies, and political parties are societies that compete for excellence and success. Jesuits belong to a society, while the members of a church parish or congregation form a community. The confounding of society and community is no mere semantic mistake. If communities are a natural growth, then they cannot be constructed or imposed. Utopian socialist experiments all foundered on this rock: the attempt to impose the community's rule of love upon members of a society who had gathered together to work on a project. The ultimate confusion is reached by politicians who redefine the nation as a theoretical abstraction, as Lincoln did when he declared America a nation "dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." It is not simply that Lincoln's proposition is either trivial or counterfactual but that the concept of propositional nationhood is a contradiction in terms, a paradoxical invitation to the total state.

A national community cannot be invented overnight or in a single generation. Like the followers of Aeneas or the colonists who first came to the New World, the children of Israel, whom Moses led out of Egypt, were not yet a nation, and so long as they were dedicated to a project—reaching the Promised Land—they could not form a genuine community. Their nostrils still recalled the fleshpots of Egypt, and their necks were too stiff to endure the gentle yoke of their God, Who condemned them, as punishment for trusting the ten faithless spies, to wander for 40 years. The decades in the wilderness forged the bonds of community among their children, and the older generation of Egyptian Jews had to pass away before their children could take possession of the Promised Land. The fathers had formed a society, a company of adventure and exploration of the type that settled Virginia, but only their children could live within a community.

The community of Jews was, in fact, a congeries of a dozen self-governing tribes, within which the most solid communities were extended families. The deeper unity of Israel was expressed by their religion, by their worship of the same God, and, when they succeeded in forming an actual nation, the unity of that nation was represented by the temple, which David (like Moses) could conceive but not bring to fruition.

The Jews did not hold on to the Promised Land for ever. They were subjugated and dispersed by the empires of the Assyrians, Babylonians, and finally (under Vespasian) the Romans, and they became, in Christian myth, the Wandering Jew, condemned to roam the earth in punishment for his mistreatment of Jesus on the way to Calvary.

For many European Jews, across the centuries of exile, the dream of return remained alive, and they began returning to Turkish-held Palestine in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Some settlers of Israel had religious motivations, while others were utopian revolutionaries, devoted as much to Marx as to Moses, who dreamed of creating a new kind of community, without distinctions of wealth and property, where marriage was a rational contract between liberated individuals and children were raised in common.

The *kibbutz* was an impossible experiment and not an authentic community. Communities are made of families, after all, and the *kibbutz* represents a denial of the family, an ideological project not much different from the societies imposed by communist parties between 1917 and 1990. Such people could never have a community, much less a nation, but their children and their children's children, falling away from the utopian dreams, were turning into the new children of Israel, people with roots in the land, whose children grew up not in the land that their remote ancestors had left 2,000 years ago, but in a land where their parents and grandparents had lived and died and shed their blood.

During the same period in which some Jews refounded a community in the Middle East, their once-Christian neighbors in Europe and, especially, in America were following in the footsteps of the Wandering Jew. In popular mythology, Americans have always been a race of Daniel Boones and Huck Finns, forever pulling up stakes and lighting out for the territories. But most Americans stayed put or left only under the pressure of necessity. Even for pioneers, the goal was not the move itself (a terrible hardship, especially for the women) but some place where they could put down roots and leave their bones.

That conservative side of the American character has disappeared in my lifetime. I have lived, by the standards of my countrymen, a comparatively sedentary life, but by the time I reached the age of 40, I had lived in six states and in ten separate towns and over twice that many houses (to say nothing of apartments). Mine, however, has been a static existence compared to that of my wife, an Air Force brat, who has lived in ten states and two foreign countries.

People who have moved several times can never be at home anywhere, no matter what lies they tell themselves about "my very good friend Lars Johnson" (whom they met only last month at the Lutheran "Brats for Brats" benefit for legally challenged adolescents). Friends are not made that easily, except the kind of "friends" it will be no pain to lose when we move on. And we do keep moving on and do not understand why other people refuse to budge. Send the Palestinians to Jordan—what difference will it make? They are all Arabs. Why not give the Israelis New Jersey, and see if they can make that desert bloom? Send the Krajina Serbs to Kosovo and then to Bosnia, ship the Catholics south out of Ulster . . . after all, the globe is shrinking, Europe has one currency, and English or Esperanto is perfectly adequate for international commerce.

And yet, although we do not know what we are missing, we miss it, nonetheless, and shed tears over *A Trip to Bountiful* and *Cinema Paradiso*. Americans are almost obsessed with genealogy and spend time and money (as I have done) tracing some ne'er-do-well ancestor who came from a wide spot in the road like Castle Island in County Kerry. The sense of ancestry that we are trying to recover is the temporal dimension of the sense of community for which we thirst, like Tantalus, without ever being able to slake the thirst. Tantalus is punished eternally for the crime of killing his own son and serving him to the gods, just as his descendant Agamemnon sacrificed his own daughter for the sake of his expedition against Troy. In our quest for success, how many of us American fathers have done the same, uprooting our families in order to pursue careers, severing connections with friends and relatives, denying our children the fundamental human need to live within a community? c

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1937

by Robert Beum

Money ran out and quietness came home;
The streets were going to forget the cars,

We traveled in our houses and our books,
Took an old motley neighborhood inside;

Quietness gathered in the stores, at school
Pencil and paper showed you it could write;

It was the quietness the Big Bands played,
Ballads and blues haunted its lonely places;

When jukes and radios jumped up and down
You heard it best and knew there was a choice;

Clothes were the color of it and the cut,
A spate of it for safety was a tie,

Put it on top, and there it was, a hat;
It was the matinee, it was her hand.

To City Planners

by Robert Beum

Not every street can save a child:
Find an old motley—Lexington,
Leona, Camden, Starr, St. Clair
Victorian, Roman, art nouveau
Half-timber, brick, frame, vacant lot
A child would strew to be at home
Explorer, penman, soldier, gnome . . .
What can you plan—that's life or art?

Italians, Germans, Irish, Poles,
Strewn by the trains, train-time crisp
And Sunday quiet—Lexington,
Leona, Camden, St. Clair, Starr
To vacant lots and hollyhocks
In cinder alleys to the years . . .
What can you plan that saves a child?
What's everything but everything?

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by Joe Sobran

What Was a Chaperone?

I confess it: My television is always on. I seldom watch the news, the talking heads, the public-spirited uplift, *Masterpiece Theater*, or the educational stuff. No, I watch old movies. Constantly.

I watch them because they bring back the good old days. I think, for instance, of a film (whose title I forget) in which Humphrey Bogart gets into a serious car accident; in the next scene, he is lying in a hospital bed—puffing a cigarette. The good old days.

Now of course, the moment you utter the phrase "the good old days," you cross your arms over your skull to ward off the blows it is sure to provoke from the knowing cynics. Yes, I know all about child labor, racial segregation, infant mortality, medieval torture, and the myriad other things that make liberal lips curl when you dare to praise the past. But when people talk about the good old days, they nearly always mean something specific: The era of good manners.

Can anyone deny that American manners have declined from the age of William Powell and Cary Grant to that of Marlon Brando and Dennis Hopper? From the bow tie and the tuxedo to the T-shirt and the leather jacket? From the ballroom and the chaperone to the easy lay? (How do you explain to today's youth what a chaperone is—or was? "A primitive method of birth control"?) Censors debated like Scholastic theologians when Clark Gable used the word "damn" on the screen; it seems silly now only because we have become inured to hearing obscenities—not from screen villains, but from heroes.

It's not just that manners have gotten worse; it's that bad manners have become a positive moral ideal, a mark of "authenticity." Brando has even carried this ideal over from movies into real life, as have his countless imitators. Today's movies observe a rigid code of bad manners, and life, as Oscar Wilde put it, imitates art.

At least Brando knew what he was doing. He was rude on purpose, for dramatic effect. He may even have (barely) qualified as a gentleman, according to Wilde's definition: one who never hurts another's feelings unintentionally. Today, you encounter young people who don't even know when they're being rude. You thank a waiter (though, in the good old days, it was poor form, according to the etiquette books, to thank servants) and he replies not "You're welcome" but "No problem," as if you were apologizing for having bothered him and he were absolving you. No, he doesn't think he's being rude; he thinks he's being gracious!

Presiding over the old movies, in the era of the Hays Office, was the principle of chastity. Men and women kept their distance and their secrets; that was part of the tense, and intense, pleasure of courtship. Love had to be a dream before it could come true. Lovers could achieve intimacy only if they had first been strangers, almost aliens; today's instant intimacy isn't really *achieved*, because there was never any distance to overcome in the first place. Neither lover's personality holds any mysteries; their coupling can occur as casually as that of two moths meeting at a streetlight, and it is about as permanent.

In the old romantic comedy, from Benedick and Beatrice to Astaire and Rogers, the first stage of romance was often bickering—an ostensibly hostile way of "getting to know you." This presupposed that there was something to know, apart from the plumbing: a specific human being, like unto, yet unlike, all others. This view of romance lent itself naturally to songs and serenades, love expressed in art—the expression being an essential part of the lover's delight in the experience of love itself. But today, we are all equal—which is to say, interchangeable.

Is the sexual revolution cause or effect of American crassness? Hard to say. It may be rash to blame fast sex on fast food, but there must be some obscure connection. Deferred gratification, Catholic or Calvinist, is passé; even the cunning wiles of the seducer are outdated, because, after all, seduction takes time, waiting. A lusty woman, who surrenders without waiting to be assaulted, is hardly a "conquest." Life spans may be longer than ever, but patience isn't. Orgasms delayed are orgasms denied.

The modern world tries to eliminate distance between persons, in order to reduce them to convenient political and commercial units. In the name of "civil rights," it denies even the primal freedoms of privacy and association. We are all directly answerable to the state.

But our plight isn't only political. Entertainment and mass culture also force intimacy on us. Nothing is private anymore. Decency and modesty used to serve as a moat around privacy and morality, protecting the person from undue exposure. Today's movies trap the audience into psychic nakedness; by now we expect them to, and nobody dares take offense at the soft porn and instant fornication that have become conventional. What was once "daring" is now routine.

What has all this done to our souls? The question hardly comes up, because the unspoken premise of today's vulgar culture and politics is that the soul is indistinguishable from the libido. There was a time, not so long ago, when mass culture had at least a vestigial respect for the soul, and the old movies are a healthy reflection, and reminder, of that time. The good old days. c

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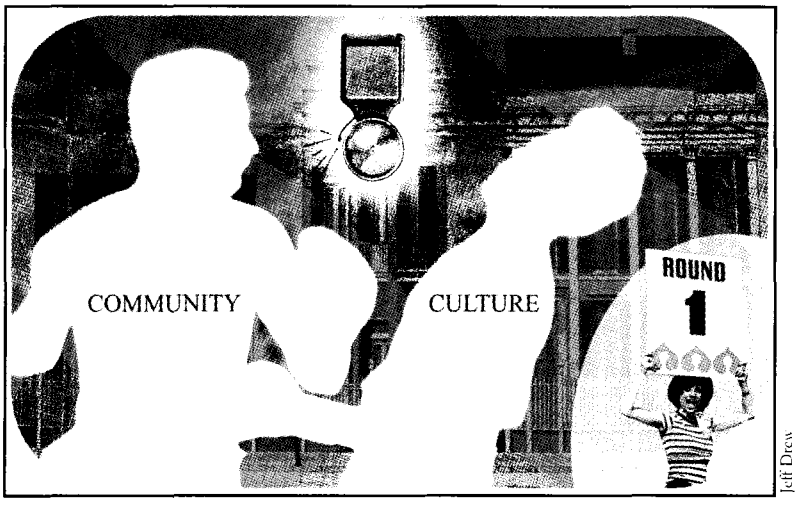
Lord, I Got Those Grays Ferry Blues

Gonna Fly Now

by E. Michael Jones



When I called Mike Rafferty to arrange a meeting to discuss a possible symposium on the demise of the local community, I had to choose a different date from the one I wanted because Mike was busy that night. He was boxing at the Spectrum. Like Rocky Balboa, Mike Rafferty lives ten minutes from the Spectrum. Unlike Rocky, Mike Rafferty is a lightweight—and a cop. Unlike Rocky, he will never make enough money fighting to move out of the neighborhood, which may explain why he is interested in preserving it—what is left of it, at least.

Grays Ferry, a working-class neighborhood in Philadelphia, lies across the Schuylkill River from the University of Pennsylvania, a geographical fact that has saved it from the University's penchant to gobble up Catholic neighborhoods where no geographical barrier intervenes, as it did to the west in St. Francis de Sales Parish. The Irish in Grays Ferry used to unload the coal barges that came down the Schuylkill from the mines in the mountains. Then they became cops and firemen and worked for the utilities and the mills until the mills all left town in search of slave labor in the southern hemisphere. But their penchant for fighting remained constant. The young men who hang out in bars in Grays Ferry are avid sports fans in general and fans of the Notre Dame "Fighting Irish" in particular, probably because the team name suits their pugnacious ethnic heritage.

Johnny Lynch had the Fighting Irish Leprechaun tattooed to his forearm when I interviewed him on a barstool at 29th and Tasker, the social hub of the neighborhood. Johnny had been arraigned the day before on charges of aggravated assault, simple assault, ethnic intimidation, terroristic threats, burglary, riot, and related charges in a case that came to be known as the "Annette Williams Story."

E. Michael Jones is the editor of Culture Wars.

The official version of the story, the one repeated in all the newspaper accounts, is that a mob of "20 to 50" drunken white men beat up a black woman in her nightgown after she had been awakened from a sound sleep in her home. Once the story got out in that form, it solidified like wet concrete.

"She was dozing in her bedroom about 1:30 a.m.," wrote Michael Matza of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, "when a commotion snapped her awake." (Journalists favor the *faux*-novelist style when they want to create an aura of verisimilitude and sympathy. The pseudodramatic tone of the article indicates that the reader is supposed to accept her version of the event as the true one.)

"Squinting through the window of her Grays Ferry rowhouse," Matza continues (causing the alert reader to wonder what he was doing in her bedroom at that hour of the night), "Annette Williams, a black housekeeper, saw a pile of white men atop her son, Raheem, pounding the 17-year-old in the middle of the street. She tore downstairs in her nightgown. It was cold, she was barefoot, and mayhem was erupting, she said."

At this point, the truth of the story begins to emerge. The real focus of the incident was not Annette Williams at all but her son, who had gotten into a fight in the street outside his mother's house. Only after Matza sets the tone in the article's first paragraph does he return to conventional newspaper reporting and reveal that this account was based on Williams' first sworn statement. Then Matza slips into editorial-page style by telling the reader that the melee brought "shame" to the neighborhood.

Yvonne Latty's account in the *Philadelphia Daily News* takes virtually an identical approach: "Barefoot and wearing only a nightgown," Latty begins in her best "you-are-there" manner, "Annette Williams ran into the cold February night as a mob of white men yelled racial slurs while they kicked and punched

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her."

That Latty and Matza should use virtually the same opening paragraph is not surprising, since great minds always run in the same circles. In addition, both papers are owned by the same company, but there is something more at work here, namely, cultural patterns that replicate themselves without conscious orchestration that we could characterize as "conspiracy." This is Journalism 101—a style of writing, in other words, which is supposed to grab the TV-besotted reader, even if, in the process, it introduces an intolerable amount of bias into the story. We are led to believe from both accounts that the mob of white guys formed specifically to wake Annette Williams up and beat her as she stood there on the cold sidewalk in her nightgown. At this point, we have to raise the question of motivation. Is there some reason why these white guys would want to wake Annette Williams out of a sound sleep and beat her? Did she owe these 50 white guys money or something? But that question is easily answered by appealing to the catch-all hermeneutic of American culture, the liberal version of the *radix malorum*, namely, racism. They beat up Annette Williams because they are white, Irish racists. End of story.

I grew up in an almost-Irish neighborhood on the other side of town, a section I would in no way characterize as tough, but I do remember lots of fighting as a young man—mostly Irish Catholics fighting other Irish Catholics because they happened to hang out on different street corners. For a cultural referent, I can recommend Pat Buchanan's autobiography, *Right From the Beginning*, which describes how growing up Irish in Washington, D.C., involved frequent fisticuffs. Or, perhaps, the first *Rocky* movie, which depicts Kensington, still another tough section of Philadelphia. Or the story of Jerry Judge, who was the toughest kid in Northeast Philadelphia in the mid-60's. Judge eventually became a professional boxer and had his jaw broken by Jerry Quarry, who lasted a few rounds with Muhammed Ali before one more great white hope ended up with his back on the canvas.

Not too long ago, I listened to Midge Decter, wife of *Commentary* editor Norman Podhoretz, describe growing up in St. Paul, where her Jewish friends were beaten up by Irish Catholics. At the time, I thought about empathizing publicly before the New York neocon audience by telling Midge that I could feel her pain. *Don't take it personally, Midge*, I felt like saying. *I, too, used to get beat up by Irish Catholics, and I'm Irish Catholic myself.*

So fighting and being Irish are sort of related, and before the sexual revolution of the 60's took over the culture and assigned a whole new set of meanings to cultural icons, there was nothing particularly sinister about an Irishman getting into a fistfight. In fact, it was part of this culture's ethnic iconography. Think, for a moment, of Pat O'Brien portraying Fighting Father Duffy or *Angels With Dirty Faces* or just about any other Pat O'Brien movie, and it becomes obvious that we are talking about a bygone age. Or recall John Wayne in *The Quiet Man*, which is a whole movie about Ireland and fistfights. Wayne and Victor McLaughlin pummeled each other from Derry to Cork, and no one called the police or declared them terrorists.

But that, as they say, was then, and this is now, and suddenly the culture does not think that Johnny Lynch is so harmless anymore. If Johnny Lynch decides to get in a fistfight with another Irishman, he can still be written off as a cultural icon, like the Notre Dame logo tattooed on his left forearm. If he gets into a fistfight with any of Grays Ferry's blacks, however, the situation changes dramatically. Now, he is accused of being a terrorist and portrayed as such in the press. If you wonder at the dramatic nature of the change from then to now, rent *Patriot Games*, a movie about sinister Irish guys who do not use contraceptives, and, as a result, are capable of anything, including shooting up your yuppie-doctor-wife's Porsche. Suddenly, it is no longer cute to be Irish, as it was in Hollywood during the 40's and 50's. *This* type of guy, *Patriot Games* fairly screams at us, is America's worst nightmare. We are talking about something serious here: aggressively Irish ethnic white guys who do not use contraceptives. We have to bring the full might of the CIA to bear against them to make the world safe for yuppie doctors and their sports cars.

Johnny Lynch was not at the organizational meeting for the symposium, but Dan Lynch, the head of the Grays Ferry community organization, was, and the story he told about what had been happening in the neighborhood since the trials surrounding the Annette Williams Story was not encouraging. Grays Ferry is one of the last ethnic neighborhoods in Philadelphia. Its white residents continue to be demonized by the press, and yet, in a disconcerting way, they react by emulating all the icons that the dominant culture tells them to emulate. For the most part, that means emulating professional sports figures, and so I saw lots of young white guys wearing gold chains around their necks and baggy basketball uniforms. They listen to the music that goes with the clothes, and they engage in the behavior that goes with the clothes and music. As a result, many of the white girls end up sleeping with the black gang members who constitute the government's occupation force in a large, citywide ethnic-cleansing operation. The Irish ethnics do not make their own music, they do not dance their own dances, and they get accused and convicted of crimes that are ignored when the area's black residents commit them. The Irish Catholics of Grays Ferry are confronted with the most basic rule of cultural life: Either you occupy the culture or the culture occupies you, and, for the most part, they do not know that they are accomplices in their own cultural subjugation. When I attended Grays Ferry Appreciation Day in the neighborhood a few years back, the schoolyard where it was held was adorned with two Irish flags and one American flag. From this perspective, they were twice as Irish as they were American, but when they began blasting the Rolling Stones over the p.a. system, they revealed, once again, their inability to occupy their own cultural space.

The media campaign against the neighborhood's residents is, in many ways, the least of their worries. Much more destructive is the political manipulation of housing, which has been the most powerful weapon in the arsenal of social engineering in America. Dan Lynch tells the story of how Section 8 housing works to break up the neighborhood. A landlord from Bryn Mawr buys a house in Grays Ferry and puts the worst family he can find in it, for which he receives $800 per month from the government in Section 8 rental money. Since he receives the same amount of money no matter how much he pays for the house, the landlord has a vested interest in driving the price of housing down, something he accomplishes by bringing in the most antisocial tenants he can find. Since the neighborhood's decent residents cannot stand the crime, they move out *en masse*, causing housing prices to fall.

In the summer of 1966, Martin Mullen, a state senator from Most Blessed Sacrament Parish in Southwest Philadelphia and head of the Senate Budget Committee, held up the entire state

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budget over contraception, which was the cutting edge of social engineering in Pennsylvania at the time. Eventually, Mullen prevailed and the state did not get into the contraception business—not then, at least. But something else began to happen over the summer of 1966: Whites began their ten-year-long exodus out of MBS Parish in earnest. By 1976, the once-Irish neighborhood was almost completely black; the whites had been driven out by increasing racial violence. One of the significant consequences of that migration was that Martin Mullen lost his job as state senator, as his constituency, once concentrated in a densely populated Irish Catholic area, eight blocks by eight blocks, was dispersed into the surrounding suburbs and lost its political power.

The racial situation in Philadelphia was never the same as the situation in the South. To claim it was bespoke ulterior political motives. Philadelphia was a composite of ethnic neighborhoods and ethnic parishes and churches. When Muhammad Kenyatta, a local shake-down artist who came to be known as a civil-rights activist, walked into St. Anthony's Parish in Chester and announced that there were no black people in the church, he was right. There were no Irish, Germans, Poles, or Hmong, either. St. Anthony's was an Italian parish, built by Italians for Italians. To claim that this was similar to the school segregation practiced in the South (or the neighborhood segregation of upper-middle-class Northern suburbs) is an intentional misreading of the situation. Racial "integration" in Philadelphia is just another way of breaking up Catholic neighborhoods. The same people who promoted the sexual revolution promoted civil-rights activists such as Kenyatta in their efforts to break up Catholic ethnic neighborhoods. Racial politics was a front for sexual revolution, which was, in turn, a front for political control, and Martin Mullen could no longer oppose government funding of contraception when his political constituency in Most Blessed Sacrament Parish in Southwest Philadelphia was dispersed throughout the suburbs.

The sexual revolution and white migration from the cities did not just happen. Both were parts of the liberal project to remake America in the years following World War II. The first label that applied to this campaign of social engineering was "urban renewal"; later, it became the "civil-rights movement"; now, it is known as "Section 8." Behind all of the change in nomenclature, the intention remains constant: Americans are to be denied the right to associate with people like themselves. They are to be denied control over the local community in favor of political control from above. They are allowed to own property, even their own homes, only under certain conditions, all of which are established by the people who control the culture.

People such as Mike Rafferty and Dan Lynch are the exception to the rule, which, in this case, seems to be demoralization. When Dan Lynch ran for state representative for the neighborhood's district, he would have been elected had the neighborhood's 1,900 registered voters gone to the polls, but only 500 people showed up that day. The rest seem content to sit on their bar stools and watch the city's professional sports teams, the modern-day version of bread and circuses.

The last time I was in Grays Ferry, I met with a different group of people. When I said that I wanted to come back after I had finished my book on the destruction of ethnic neighborhoods, *The Slaughter of Cities: Urban Renewal as Ethnic Cleansing* (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine's Press, 2002), one of the people attending said, "Hurry up. We may not be here much longer." That man did not attend the second meeting. In spite of assuring me over the phone that he would be there, he was tending bar a block away.

At the end of the meeting, we decided to go ahead with the conference in the fall. Why is such a meeting important? First of all, Grays Ferry may not be especially acute when it comes to fighting the culture wars, but it is a real community, a group of people of common belief who live in one place and know one another. Groups like this are rare now, because the government has destroyed most of them through social engineering. The fact that they are not adept in fighting the culture wars gives some indication that they might profit from people who are, just as the latter, now scattered across the country, might profit from the experiences of an actual community fighting for survival. When each of those culture warriors is part of a community and each local community has some of Grays Ferry's savvy, then we will make some progress away from the current parlous state of affairs, where isolation is the only thing Americans have in common. ‹C›

Question and Answer

Robert Beum

What makes the liberal historians so gay?
Rob truth, not banks, and live another day.

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Food Stamps for Farmers and Other Absurdities

Power, Empire, and the Loss of American Community

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Jeff Drew

A dry snow scouring the Sherman Mountains east of Laramie turned to rain outside Cheyenne and blew in sheets across Interstate 80, from Pine Bluffs to Sidney to Ogallala to North Platte to Kearney to Grand Island to York, Nebraska, and from York south to Geneva, Bruning, and Hebron: 501 miles of deluging rain from a heavy-hanging waterlogged sky. Just north of the state line, the rain stopped, and I drove the last 41 miles across the rolling Kansas plains, gray from drought when now, in early May, they should show vivid green, or yellow-green. In Concordia, just before Ed Detrixhe's shopping center on U.S. 81 came into view, I made a left turn onto Highway 9 and continued 13 miles east toward Ames, following close behind a horse trailer that raised a cloud of dust each time its right wheels drifted into the shoulder. At the grain elevator, I swung right and drove the last two miles south to the Detrixhe farm. Though I hadn't visited Mari and Ed for two years, I had seen the place just 13 days ago—from 37,000 feet on a flight from Denver to Chicago, passing a couple of miles south of the distinctive house fixed indubitably in the rich Kansas soil, which hadn't seen rain since early April. Life is unfair—to farmers, in particular.

Still, Ed's winter wheat grew brave and green toward the June harvest, and Ed himself remained unfazed by drought as well as by the loss of Wal-Mart, which had moved the year before from its 40,000-square-foot lodging in his center to its own quarters, a new superstore three times the size at the south end of town. (Nobody in Concordia, being perfectly content with the smaller version, had particularly *wanted* the larger store—with the exceptions of the local government, the town boosters and economic growth councils, and the developers who offered Wal-Mart a special invitation, plus inducements financed by a tax assessment through which Ed is compelled to subsidize his business competitor, America's largest corporation.) We drank a couple of beers with Mari in the kitchen, and the three of us finished off two bottles of red wine in the course of one of her fine suppers, while watching meadowlarks, robins, and gold finches fly in and out of the plum thicket behind the house and the cottontail rabbits make their stealthy advance on Ed's springing vegetable garden.

Ed and I killed four rabbits with four shots from a .223 rifle next morning and, after breakfast, went our separate ways, he to the orchard with his grafting basket, Mari to her flower garden, I to Salina 60 miles southwest of the farm for a chat with Wes Jackson at The Land Institute about Matfield Green, the small town (population 56) in the Flint Hills of Kansas that he and the Institute have recently bought up—or, anyway, into. I found Wes in his writing cabin at the edge of the woods above the Smoky Hill River (it used to be Mari Detrixhe's office when she worked for the Institute in the early 80's), sitting over an abstract of a talk he was preparing to deliver to a Ranchers for Profit meeting in Wichita. I removed my Stetson to shake hands, and Wes motioned me graciously into a chair. "Ranchers are in the most favorable position of anyone who wants to return to sustainable agriculture," he remarked as he handed me a copy of his abstract. "The reason is, they're better able than farmers to use a natural ecosystem as a standard."

"That's heresy to environmentalists where I come from," I told him. "But I agree with you."

Wes and his first wife, Dana—both of them native Kansans—founded The Land Institute, "a nonprofit educational research organization, devoted to the subject of sustainable alternatives in agriculture, energy, waste-management, and shelter," in 1976. The original plan was to start a school, but after the school building burned in the fall of the same year and was rebuilt with the help of supporters, the Jacksons expanded their

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original idea to create an agricultural think tank comprising the house and school building, barns, outbuildings, a greenhouse, windmills and solar collectors, testplots, and gardens. As Wendell Berry describes it, "The one place is home and farm, campus, experiment station, laboratory, and museum. It is a place to live and work, teach and learn." Already familiar with Wes's central program (described in *New Roots For Agriculture*, 1980) for a perennial crop of mixed native grains to replace monocultures as a means of preventing erosion, rebuilding topsoils, increasing water retention, and reducing the use of toxic chemicals and chemical fertilizers—"Building agriculture based on the way the prairie works"—I was curious to learn what was behind the Matfield Green project, as well as how it fit with the Institute's basic concerns. (Maybe if Salt Lake City, Phoenix, and Denver grow together in my lifetime, I'll retire to central Kansas myself.) "I assume you don't have in mind a Kansas version of Williamsburg," I suggested. "Or a bed-and-breakfast American Gothic theme park."

> The inevitable result of this destruction of biological information is also the destruction, in time, of the cultural information human communities acquired through less rapacious and more stable relationship with the natural environment. And the reward for both is *power*.

Wes hoisted one foot onto the top of his desk and grinned at me.

"Well, we certainly aren't interested in gentrifying the place," he said. "And we're experiencing the difficulty of establishing—or reestablishing—a presence. We bought up the hardware store and the old school—turned it into residences. The main lesson to keep in mind is, don't try to do anything with declining towns that is dependent on the pyramid of declining resources: That just marginalizes their potential further rather than bring them into the mainstream. It's foolish to establish nonsustainable, brittle economies in small towns. We use the school as a place for miniconferences, and to house the folks, but we're certainly not in Matfield Green to save or improve the town. On the other hand, our presence there serves to validate it for itself: People just don't believe a town that size—*their* town—is worthy. 'Well, you've never heard of it,' they'll say. Their parents tell them to get out, as fast as they can. The cultural information stored up for more than a century doesn't interest them anymore. I got the kids to point their cameras at things that appeal to them. Then I got the English teachers to have their kids write essays about the photos. No more 'prairie weeds' but 'wildflowers' instead—these children began to recognize the beauty of their environment! They have a potential connection to the land; this exercise helps them to make it. You know: If it weren't for oil, Matfield Green—all these towns—would be sustainable. Highly dense energy destroys information of the cultural as well as the biological variety. And now I'm going to make a bold assertion. There is not a single piece of technology since the Stone Age that hasn't drawn down on the stock of ecological capital available at that time."

According to the Jackson thesis, the technological output of the human race is built on a steadily declining base of ecological capital. Unlike the natural world, which is "sun-sponsored"—runs, that is, on "contemporary" sunlight—mankind in the fossil fuel age depends on the extraction of ancient sunlight for its energy source, stored as geological capital. When humans developed equipment to cut down the rain forests in which an accumulation of biological information was stored, they destroyed the information inherent in the trees and soil in order to "sponsor empire." The inevitable result of this destruction of biological information is also the destruction, in time, of the cultural information human communities acquired through a less rapacious and more stable relationship with the natural environment. And the reward for both is *power*. (That is why, Wes pointed out wryly, the Beltway types don't appreciate people like Wendell Berry.)

"Imagine it as a teeter," he suggested, "with biological and cultural information on the one end, energy on the other. The cutting of the Ohio forest reduced the biological information that forest sequestered. Now, you need 'stewards of the land'—the Amish—who *still* can't accomplish what the forest did. The Amish increase their cultural information, while continuing nevertheless to draw down on nonrenewable energy to compensate for the loss of biological information. The system we have now will not be the system we will have for long. Are you aware that farmers today are receiving food stamps? Rural areas have become just as vulnerable and dependent as urban and suburban ones are."

Here was the connection between The Land Institute and Matfield Green. "So what's the answer?" I asked Wes.

He shrugged.

"Change will come through the technology that caused the problem in the first place. We may never have had, until now, the technology to know how to change. I'm not interested in the Mother Teresa approach to problems. I'm interested in establishing reform that would obviate the Mother Teresa syndrome. Beyond that . . . None of us wants to make a problem as complicated as it really is. The difficulty with any movement is, we invariably narrow the argument, leaving no chance to address the cultural fabric that represents the greater reality. So, what we go with boils down to something that is both simplified and simplifying."

We went for lunch at a restaurant in downtown Salina that offered two hamburgers for the price of one, or two bucks. Out of the five or six customers already in the place, three at least were the morbidly obese people—like white elephants—you find all across America these days, in the Plains states and the South especially, perhaps: the bored, unused products (or victims) of the dense energy, rural decline, gathered-in power, and empire Wes had been discussing. Across the street from the restaurant was Kansas Wesleyan University, Wes Jackson's *alma mater*. At The Land Institute, I bought a couple of his books from the main office before getting into my rental car and dri-

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ving west across the Smoky Hill River. An old, red truck sat immobilized beside the borrow pit, while in the middle distance a solitary figure—Wes—came trudging in the opposite direction down the gravel road. I gave him a ride back to his writing cabin, and we said goodbye again. He was heading off to the West Coast on a fundraising trip the following day and, the week after, to Great Britain, where he had speaking engagements in London and Edinburgh.

I arrived at the farm in time for drinks and an appetizer—pizza with cheese and salsa, made from scratch by Mari—followed by a supper of pot roast served with early garden vegetables and two more bottles of red wine, the second the product of Ed's vineyard and Mari's labors at the wine press; dessert was an exquisite gooseberry tart (another Mari creation). Ed had chosen Brahms for our dinner music, and we sat late around the dinner table by candlelight, enjoying the cello sonatas as we conversed and watched the dry lightning flashes explode within boluses of black cloud that hung tantalizingly in the northern sky. Mari excused herself finally to help Ben with his homework, and Ed and I retired to his den, where we lit pipes, opened a bottle of brandy, and settled into comfortable chairs to finish watching a documentary about John Paul II in which Andrea Marcovicci makes a cameo appearance, enchanting as ever as she dabs at her eyes while describing how she had faith as a girl, only to lose it "in a flash."

"You *can* have a complete life out here," Ed concluded, "but you have to make it on your own, for yourself."

In the morning we took another whack with the .223 at the rabbit population, enjoying the mayhem more than was good for us. ("We're the Culture of Death," Ed remarked with a grimace, mindful of the papal documentary.) Breakfast was served on the nearly completed loggia, designed and built at the expense of backbreaking labor by Ed over a period of eight seasons, its three Romanesque arches beneath a bas-relief frieze overlooking a plum thicket, the crushed gravel drive, and the rough Kansas grasses stretching away toward the wheat that springeth green. An inscription inside the curve of the inner wall read: "We learn only when it is too late that the marvel is the passing moment—François Mitterand." "Of course, Mitterand was a socialist," Ed conceded, "but, oh well."

He showed me the new garlic standing in green spears from the loamy soil and the potatoes struggling to recover from a late frost the week before. Following paths cut by the cutterbar through the tall grasses and lined by pedestaled statuary in the classical style hauled down by pickup from a stone dealer in Nebraska, we passed by the Tower—a concrete gazebo on stilts—and came at last to the vineyard, where Ed called my attention to the pinpoint grapes in tiny clusters, a miniature of their own maturity, touching as a sonar image of a child in the womb.

"You know, you have a lovely place here," I told Ed. "It's a work of art, really."

"It's Mari's and my life's work," he said simply. "As well as my refuge from . . . everything."

Later, I accompanied Ed into the hickory orchard southwest of the house where I watched as, using his grafting knife, he cut away the bark from the lower end of the scion wood, dormant from three months' refrigeration, and fitted the stick with its three buds into three bark flaps rising three inches above the root stock. He wrapped the graft firmly with tape to hold it in place against birds and the Kansas wind and added a covering of tin foil as protection for the vital cambium—the thickness of about a single cell—against the UV rays. Finally, he clipped one of the small buds, leaving two to receive the little tree's total sum of sap and energy.

"And that's all there is to it?" I asked him.

"That's it. It's called a three-flap graft. I'll come back around the middle of July and remove the tape and foil. And in a couple of weeks, when the buds start to swell, I'll check for stinkbugs, which are the bane of my existence. Anything you try to raise, it seems like all of nature's out to beat you to it. Let's go try that exercise of Cooper's I was telling you about."

We got the rifles from the Cave, the concrete-lined excavation where Ed keeps his tools and reloading equipment and Mari has her wine press, and drove over to the quarter-section where the 600-meter swath with a bench rest at one end that is Ed's rifle range stretches along one side of a wheatfield. According to Col. Jeff Cooper, anyone calling himself a rifleman ought to be able to assume any position besides the prone one, take aim, and fire a shot *inside ten seconds* that strikes within a ten-inch-wide target set at a distance of 200 meters. As Ed and I have the utmost respect—not to say veneration—for Colonel Cooper, and as both of us regard ourselves as serious shooters, the colonel's challenge was not one we felt willing to ignore. At 200 meters, the pie plate, appearing like a white pimple in my nine-power scope, bobbled discouragingly behind the black crosshairs. I took a deep breath, squeezed off a dry shot, and shook my head.

"I don't think I can hit that this way," I said.

"I don't think I can, either," Ed agreed.

"You go first," I suggested magnanimously.

I pushed the button on the timer and watched as he dropped to a sitting position on the grass, braced his elbows on the insides of his knees, and began the trigger pull. Thinking: *This is what Wes Jackson wants to get back to. This is how the place called Kansas was meant to be realized by human empathy, effort, and skill. This is what human civilization was meant to be.*

The sound of the exploding .7 mm shell crashed around us and the timer flashed 9.57 seconds.

"You made it on the time, anyway," I said.

Ed shook his head.

"I don't think I hit," he said.

But when we walked forward to look, he had. c

Wes Jackson is the author of several books, including:

Becoming Native to This Place
(University Press of Kentucky, 1994)

Altars of Unhewn Stone
(Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1987)

New Roots for Agriculture
(University of Nebraska Press, 1980)

To purchase any of these books, subscribe to the thrice-yearly *Land Report*, or simply find out more about the Land Institute and Matfield Green, visit *www.LandInstitute.org* or write to:

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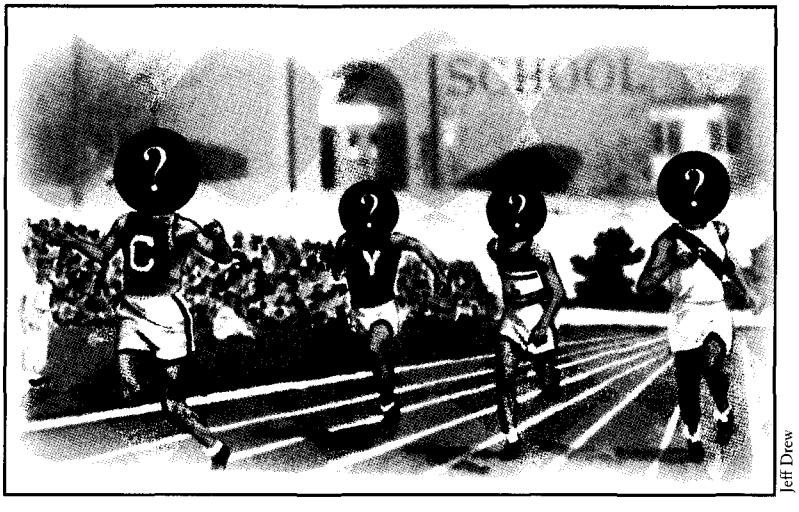
Not Separate and Not Equal

The San Fernando Valley

by Roger D. McGrath



Jeff Drew

Oh I'm packin' my grip and I'm leavin' today,
'cause I'm taking a trip California way
I'm gonna settle down and never more roam,
and make the San Fernando Valley my home.

I'll forget my sins, I'll be makin' new friends,
where the West begins and the sunset ends.
Cause I've decided where yours truly should be
and it's the San Fernando Valley for me.

So sang Roy Rogers in the 1943 Western *San Fernando Valley*. The song, sharing its name with the movie and written by Gordon Jenkins, became a hit the next year when it was recorded by Bing Crosby. Small wonder: GIs were preparing to land at Normandy, and Marines, at Saipan. The song evoked the kind of images a war-weary nation dreamed of, and no one could bring emotions to lyrics better than Crosby. It may have helped that, in those days, Crosby lived in the Valley, as did Bob Hope, Roy Rogers, Walter Brennan, John Wayne, Clark Gable, and Gary Cooper. In the Valley, they could own acres of rural land, stable horses, and ride into the sunset.

After World War II, the rush into the San Fernando Valley began. By 1950, the Valley's population had more than doubled, reaching 400,000. Much of the Valley, especially its western reaches, still consisted of wide-open spaces. I had an uncle who, for a time, kept a horse with a trainer in the far western end of the Valley. Occasionally, I would tag along with him. We would drive from home in Pacific Palisades, a coastal community lying between Santa Monica and Malibu, inland through Topanga Canyon to the stables. It was as if we were slipping back through time into the Old West. The western end of the Valley was still mostly horses, pumpkin patches, cornfields, and walnut ranches. There was even a dairy farm that produced goat milk.

By 1960, the Valley's population had more than doubled again, to a million. My sister and her husband bought a house in that same far western end of the Valley in 1961, on what had been a walnut ranch. Old properties in the area were still horse-zoned, but, when they were resold, new zoning went into effect that prohibited the keeping of horses. This was not popular among Valley residents, but zoning decisions were made "over the hill" in the city.

By the 1950's, the Valley teemed with children—white children. The Valley gained a reputation for its lack of racial diversity, as those living in Los Angeles proper were quick to point out. It was the "white suburb," and from it came the "conservative white vote" in Los Angeles city elections. Except for a few pockets of Mexican-Americans, especially in the incorporated east Valley community of the City of San Fernando, and a very small number of blacks in the same area and in nearby Pacoima, the Valley was very white indeed. The whiteness of the Valley high schools contrasted sharply with those in East, Central, and South-Central Los Angeles. From the mid-50's through the mid-60's, high schools could not be built fast enough in the Valley—Birmingham, Reseda, Monroe, Taft, Cleveland, Grant, Sylmar, Chatsworth, Granada Hills, Kennedy, El Camino. All soon had 3,000 or more students, and these were only three-year schools.

Along with the older Valley high schools (such as Canoga

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Park, Van Nuys, Polytechnic, North Hollywood, and San Fernando), these schools began flexing their muscles among the more than 50 high schools that made up the Los Angeles district. Suddenly, Valley schools were vying for city championships in football, basketball, baseball, and track. A kid at Van Nuys High grew six inches and gained 40 pounds in one year and, all of a sudden, was throwing fastballs that approached 100 m.p.h. He terrified batters. His name was Don Drysdale. A 5' 11" basketball player at Polytechnic High developed a fallaway jumpshot that was unstoppable and led his team to the championship against the best the inner city had to offer. His name was Gail Goodrich. A dozen other such Valley athletes began appearing in the sports sections of Los Angeles newspapers.

Birmingham High developed a football program that resembled a big-time college athletic factory. The school had 120 or more players turn out each fall just for the varsity squad. Nearly every year from the late 50's through the late 60's, the Braves were in the city playoffs. The 1963 team not only won the city championship but was untied and undefeated. The Braves crushed their opponents. Their linemen looked like they belonged at USC where, in fact, several of them later played. Their running back, Mike McConaghy, burst through holes that sometimes were several yards wide. McConaghy, now a school principal in the Valley, recently remarked on how different it is today: The school spirit, discipline, and work ethic are lacking to produce such a team. But back then, Birmingham's stadium was packed with thousands of students and parents for Friday night games. Their cheerleaders included Sally Field, and their drill team featured a couple hundred girls, each one in an Indian princess outfit complete with braided hair and a feather. Athletes, cheerleaders, students in the stands: They were all Birmingham Braves and proud of it.

By the 1950's, Valley high-school track teams were producing city, state, and national stars. It is nearly impossible to exaggerate the importance of track in California in those days. It vied with football as the top high-school sport. Duel meets often had crowds of a thousand or more. L.A. City Finals regularly attracted more than 20,000 fans, including hundreds of "track nuts," the aficionados of the sport who were never without a clipboard and a stopwatch. They knew every time, distance, and height recorded by the top athletes. Rivalries among the old city schools were fierce. Out of University ("Unihi") in 1943 came Melvin "Pell-Mel" Patton, who later set world records in the 100 and 220 and won gold medals at the London Olympics. From Washington High came Hugh McElhenny, who ran a 14.0 in 120 high hurdles in 1947 and went on to become an All American and an All Pro football star. Southern California was a hotbed of track: Charley Paddock, Frank Wykoff, Parry O'Brien . . .

When Valley schools began producing track stars, they had, in a sense, arrived. In 1953, Ron Morris of Burroughs High in Burbank cleared 14 feet in the pole vault to set the national prep record. Quick, muscular, and explosive Dave Davis of Canoga Park High put the shot nearly 63 feet in 1956 to break the high-school record, although later the same season another California shot-putter surpassed Davis's mark. Throughout the 50's, other Valley tracksters recorded impressive times in the 440, 880, and mile. Then, in 1960, Forrest Beaty, a 15-year-old sophomore from Hoover High in the extreme eastern end of the Valley, stunned track fans when he won California's southern section title in the 220. To do so he had to beat another young Valley speedster, Ralph Turner, a junior from a neighboring high school, Burroughs.

In 1961, Beaty and Turner scorched tracks in the Valley and beyond. Suddenly, the valley had the two fastest sprinters in the nation. Sprinters from South-Central L.A., from Compton, and from other black communities in Southern California, accustomed to excelling in the dashes, could not touch the white boys from the Valley. In the southern section finals, Ralph Turner ran the 220 in 20.5, tying the fastest time ever run by a prep. It was only good for second place. Beaty ran a mind-boggling 20.2, a national record and only two-tenths shy of the world record. He was all of 16 years old. In the state finals, Beaty won the 100 in 9.5, and Turner was second in 9.6. The 220 was run into a strong headwind, and, although the solidly built Beaty won easily, the tall, lean Turner was nosed out for second. Turner's high school career was over, but Beaty, the swiftest prep in the nation, had another year left.

Nearly 60 percent of voters in the Valley now support secession. Surprisingly, 49 percent of voters in the rest of the city also support Valley secession.

Beaty got off to a fast start in 1962. By mid-March, he had already run the 100 in 9.5 and the 220 in 20.6, the best times in the nation. Then, on the last day of the month, he ran the 100 in 9.4 to tie the national prep record set by Jesse Owens in 1933 and tied by Jim Jackson in 1954. When Owens set the record, he was nearly 20 years old, and Jackson was a month shy of 19 when he tied it. Beaty was 17-and-a-half. In meet after meet, Beaty blistered tracks and smoked the competition. He ran the 440 once on a lark and recorded a 47.3, the third-fastest time in the nation. He took the southern sectionals in 9.5 and 20.4 and then, after a horrible start, won the state 100 in 9.5. Most observers thought a good start would have given him a 9.3.

Thousands of spectators now waited anxiously for the 220 final. The field included several other runners who had broken 21 flat. "This kid Beaty just might break the world record" was the comment heard throughout the stands. When the gun went off, the crowd was on its feet, and nearly everyone was holding a stopwatch. At 70 or 80 yards, Beaty began pulling away from the field. At 110 yards, he was six or seven yards ahead and still accelerating. He was demolishing the finest 220 field in state history. Then it happened: His hamstring ripped. Richard Stebbins, from Fremont High in South-Central L.A., went on to win in 20.9. Knowing how powerful Beaty was in the second half of the 220, everyone thought he would have beaten Stebbins by 10 yards or more and run a world-record sub-20 flat. The track nuts estimated 19.7 or 19.8. Nonetheless, Beaty's 20.2, run 41 years ago, is still the fastest 220 ever by a prep.

By the early 60's, a dozen Catholic high schools (separate schools for boys and girls in those days) had been built in the

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Valley. Crespi was already a powerhouse in track. In 1964, Crespi senior Steve Caminiti, half Italian, half Irish, and all thoroughbred, tied the national prep record in the 120 highs when he ran 13.7 and broke the record in the 180 lows with a blazing 18.1. He also ran the 100 in 9.6. He was incredibly quick over both high and low hurdles, made all the more amazing by his relative lack of height. He stood something under 5' 11", far less than ideal, especially for a high hurdler.

The athletic prowess of the Valley kids was making it more difficult for those in the rest of Los Angeles to sneer at the basin on the north side of the Santa Monica Mountains. We surfers on the coast still did so when we found the "Valley kooks" in the water during the summer at our favorite spots such as Topanga or Malibu, but we stopped laughing when we ran onto the football field against them in the fall or competed with them in track in the spring.

My sister's three boys, growing up in the Valley during the 60's and 70's, had an almost idyllic childhood. Their neighborhood was filled with a bunch of kids like themselves, the schools were good, and crime was something that happened in L.A. However, most of the Valley, although many did not seem to recognize the fact, *was a part of the City of Los Angeles*. This was made abundantly clear when forced busing for the purpose of racial integration came to the Valley in the mid-70's, courtesy of the courts and the Los Angeles school board. My sister's two older boys escaped being shipped across the city, but her youngest was chosen to be used by the social engineers for their nefarious experiments. My sister started thinking about her little blond-haired, blue-eyed son being shipped into the inner city, and suddenly he had a new address—mine. My wife and I had just bought a new house in Westlake Village, far to the west of the Los Angeles city line and in another school district.

Overnight, thousands of Valley kids disappeared from the school system. Some, like my nephew, used addresses of relatives outside the L.A. district. Others had a renewal of faith, returned to the Church, and enrolled at the parish school for a good Catholic education. Catholic schools began to include Protestants—an ecumenical spirit prevailing! There had been almost no private Jewish schools in the Valley, but they, too, began springing up. Operation Bus Stop, organized for the sole purpose of putting a halt to forced busing, was established by a Jewish mother, Bobbie Fiedler.

Although the idea of a separate Valley city had been talked about earlier, it began to take on real meaning now. Had the original busing plan not collapsed, secession may have been attempted right then. So many white children fled the district, in one manner or another, that busing became a one-way operation—blacks and Latinos from the inner city were shipped out to Valley schools. This quieted the secessionists somewhat, and the movement waned. It began waxing again by the early 90's, much of its renewed vigor inspired by a sharp rise in crime in the Valley and a precipitous decline in the quality of the schools, both attributable to the arrival of tens of thousands of illegal immigrants from south of the border.

I remember a cop buddy of my older brother telling me in 1964 that he was retiring. I asked him how he could possibly retire with only ten years on the force. He chuckled and said, "No, I'm not really retiring. I've been transferred to the Devonshire Division in the Valley." The division was in Chatsworth, in the northwest corner of the Valley. There was so little for the police to do that they called duty there "retirement." Not so today. Although Chatsworth is still relatively quiet, crime has risen dramatically in the Devonshire Division. In pockets of the Valley with large numbers of illegal aliens, crime statistics rival the worst parts of the inner city.

Part of the rise in crime preceded the recent illegal invasion. With the inner-city blacks being bused to the Valley came inner-city gangs. They began driving through the quiet and relaxed neighborhoods surrounding the Valley high schools, searching for targets of opportunity. Some of these targets were teenage girls, who were plucked off the street and taken to safehouses in L.A., where they suffered multiple rapes. A few of these black gangs took root in the Valley through another destructive policy invented by social engineers. The county decided that it would be good to move a certain portion of welfare recipients out of South-Central Los Angeles to the Valley. The process was simple: The county contracted with the owner of rental property to lease an apartment or house. The owner was guaranteed payment from the county for a long term. The county then moved welfare recipients into the rental. Cheaper housing in the Valley began to fall prey to the practice.

According to polling data, most people in the Valley feel they have no control over their destiny—that the Los Angeles City Council pays little attention to them. Nearly 60 percent of voters in the Valley now support secession. Surprisingly, 49 percent of voters in the rest of the city also support Valley secession. Strong support for secession comes from other areas of Los Angeles now beginning to talk about separation, including San Pedro and Hollywood. Talk of secession in San Pedro is particularly galling to the mayor of Los Angeles, James Hahn. Not only does he live in San Pedro, but the leader of the small but growing secession movement there is one of his neighbors.

For years, the powers-that-be in Los Angeles have been saying that the Valley could not sustain itself should it break away—that its tax base was inadequate. Several exhaustive studies released in May revealed the opposite. Los Angeles has been sucking tax revenues out of the Valley and not returning an equal amount in services. The most recent numbers suggest that loss of the Valley would cost Los Angeles dearly and that a new Valley city would be required to pay L.A. "alimony." The first payment would be $128 million. Over 20 years, the annual payments would gradually decrease. Another blow to Los Angeles came when the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) decided that the question of Valley secession should go on the November ballot.

Mayor Hahn, who had issued dire warnings that the Valley could not support itself and had employed every political tactic imaginable to prevent LAFCO from allowing the question of secession to go before the voters, immediately announced the formation of an anti-secession campaign committee. Former mayor Richard Riordan and other downtown power brokers jumped on board. Within days, more than two million dollars had been pledged to the committee. Mayor Hahn hopes to raise five million. With his Valley-can't-go-it-alone argument exploded, he has been claiming that secession is highly problematic—that there are too many variables. His fear tactics have not yet made much headway in the Valley, where the consensus can be summed up by an exchange in the movie *Paint Your Wagon*. A Mormon husband warns the second of his two wives that, if she agrees to be auctioned, she will simply go to the highest bidder, and "you don't know what you'll get." Unfazed by the warning, she replies, "I know what I've had."

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Communitarians, Liberals, and Other Enemies of Community and Liberty

Scaling Back the Enlightenment

by Donald W. Livingston

Jeff Drew

I remember a time when the terms "community" and "virtue" had almost disappeared from philosophical discourse. Working on a doctorate in philosophy at Washington University in the mid-60's, I took a seminar in ethics from Prof. Herbert Spiegelberg, who had written the definitive history of phenomenology. One day, he observed that philosophers no longer even spoke of virtue. He was not entirely right, because Catholic universities, where Thomism was strong, still explored the meaning of virtue. But elsewhere, in Anglo-American as well as in Continental philosophy, the language of virtue had entirely disappeared. Spiegelberg had no view on the matter—he merely mentioned it as a curiosity.

Moral virtue had vanished because Enlightenment liberalism had come to dominate the Western intellectual classes. The ethics of liberalism was either utilitarian or Kantian, explicitly rejecting the traditional moral conception of virtue. I myself (I am ashamed to say) was a Kantian at the time and had no idea what Spiegelberg meant when he spoke of virtue. It was only years later that I came to see how serious the matter was. By rejecting virtue, the liberal tradition was not merely substituting one ethic for another but—as astonishing as this might sound—rejecting morality altogether.

Morality, as traditionally conceived, supposes, first of all, a metaphysical vision of the nature of man and the sort of life that is good for man. Virtues are cultivated dispositions of character that enable the soul to live out the life that is good for man. A virtuous soul, with much training and over a long period of time, may come to love those things that are truly good as opposed to those that merely appear to be such. Second, morality presupposes a community. A man cannot know what the good is independent of a concrete way of life, lived in community with others, in which the good is exemplified. A man becomes good through emulation and by apprenticing himself to a master craftsman in the art of human excellence. In a word, morality is *soulcraft* that touches every aspect of life: excellence in character, style of dress, manners, architecture, the form cities should take, the way gardens should be laid out, the preparation of food, what is worthy of remembrance, and so forth. Morality is an adventure, a whole way of life lived out in community with others across generations in pursuit of a common—though never fully comprehended—vision of the human good.

Communities are important because, like the family, they are the natural bearers of a valuable way of life. The 18th-century Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico argued that man is transformed from an animal into a human being only when he can sustain the institutions of religion, marriage, and burial. The marks of a genuine community are the temple, the graveyard, and the wedding celebration. The favorable connotations that attach to this essential structure of human life are inappropriately applied to associations that are not communities at all—for instance, the "business community," the "entertain-

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ment community," "gated communities," or the "homosexual community." IBM does not have a burial ground; homosexuals do not marry and beget children; and "gated communities" are often places where affluent strangers move to escape the aftermath of social disintegration. These associations may have value, but they are not communities.

This is how Greeks, Romans, Hebrews, Christians, and Muslims traditionally understood morality. These traditions had different understandings of what the human good is, what the virtues are, and how they should be ranked; but they never questioned the metaphysical postulate that there is such a thing as the human good and that morality is the adventure of critically exploring it in a concrete way of life. Liberalism rejects this fundamental assumption, arguing that a metaphysical vision of the human good is not something human beings can agree on. Since compromise over questions of the ultimate good is not possible, liberals argue that constant and implacable conflict is inevitable. Instead, we must work to establish a universal civilization based on individual autonomy (or self-rule). Everyone should be able to do what he chooses, provided he shows equal respect for the choices of others. The problematic metaphysical question of the good is set aside in favor of a set of rules that maximizes choice. Ethics is reduced to following these rules, and government is reduced to enforcing them.

> What communitarians want is the warm feeling of solidarity and depth of character that is missing in liberal theory and practice, but without the hard and intrusive restraints of virtue.

Liberalism further argues that the rules for maximizing choice are rationally self-evident and cannot be denied by any rational person. An ethical and political order governed by these rules would naturally seek to build a global, cosmopolitan civilization in which such archaisms as community, tradition, religion, moral authorities, and ethnic and national identities either disappear or become as trivial as the latest fashions. Abandoning the notion of the human good, liberalism, from the French Revolution on, stressed individual autonomy and became, thereby, the enemy of virtue, community, tradition, and religion. The most important American liberal philosopher of our time, John Rawls, had this to say about the moral life structured around a vision of the good: "Although to subordinate all our aims to one end, does not strictly speaking violate the principles of rational choice . . . it still strikes us as irrational or more likely as mad." What Rawls judged to be a form of madness is the fundamental postulate of the Hebrew, Greek, Roman, and Christian conception of the moral life. In rejecting the human good, man would also have to reject religion, for in the Western tradition—whether biblical or pagan—religion and the good are intimately connected. Richard Rorty, the voice of postmodern American liberalism, has observed that an "enlightened" and truly "liberal society . . . would be one in which no trace of divinity remained." Ronald Dworkin, whose philosophy of law has had a great influence in law schools, argues that, in conflicts between the rights of the autonomous individual and the community, the rights of the individual are "trumps."

Liberalism gradually began to shape American public policy after the Civil War and kicked into high gear after World War II. The Bill of Rights, designed primarily to protect the states—distinct political societies capable of pursuing radically different forms of social life—from the central government, was turned upside down to protect the autonomy of the *individual* from the states. The regulation of morals, law enforcement, and religion, which gave legal protection to distinct ways of life, was transferred by judicial social engineers to the central government. The education of children, which had been the province of local schools financed by real-estate taxes, was now regulated by the federal courts. The Commerce Clause of the Constitution was interpreted in such a way as to subvert local economies that sustain communities. The rules were rigged to favor large-scale agribusiness and the merger of large corporations, further weakening the small businesses that sustain local communities.

By the 1980's, the earlier philosophical rejection of the Western conception of morality was cashed out in the collapse of many of the institutions necessary to sustain it. The United States was becoming a spiritual desert, and the signs of moral decay were ubiquitous: a spectacular increase in crime, divorce, falling educational standards, promiscuous abortion, illegitimacy, anomie, and a society with little desire to reproduce itself. But then an unexpected and devastating critique of liberalism appeared. Such writers as Michael Sandel, Michael Walzer, Alasdair MacIntyre, Charles Taylor, and Amitai Etzioni demonstrated that, in its obsession with individual autonomy, liberalism had ignored the importance of community and tradition. The liberal self, they argued, is not necessarily the human self. For most of mankind, the self is radically situated in a substantial moral community (or overlapping communities) and is the bearer of both an inherited identity and the obligations that go with it.

This "communitarian" critique exposed another flaw of liberalism. Liberalism had occupied a privileged position only because of its claim to have discovered a set of neutral principles that no rational person could deny and on the basis of which a universal civilization could be built. The communitarians demonstrated that there are no such neutral rights. All of the conflicts that arise from different conceptions of the human good reappear in attempts to define fundamental rights. Utilitarianism and Kantianism—the two most popular attempts to define neutral liberal rights—are themselves incommensurable doctrines, the former holding that rights are grounded in the good consequences of action, the latter holding that their ground is independent of all consequences. And incommensurability breaks out even within utilitarianism and Kantianism. And so, after two centuries of attempts at liberal self-making, we have painfully rediscovered what the Western tradition always taught—that the human good is primary.

The intellectual death of Marxism long preceded the physical collapse of its institutions. The collapse of liberalism from a privileged neutral position to just another tradition with its own particular notion of the human good may well prove to be an

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epoch-making event. Certain habits and practices will survive, at least initially, but how can liberalism learn to speak of the human good when, for two centuries, it has carefully developed a language that pointedly excludes such speech? If rights cannot stand on their own, independent of an account of the human good, and if men cannot agree on what the human good is, how can we continue to talk of universal human rights? Moreover, the concept of the human good gives rise first to duties and then to rights. Can we expect a Universal Declaration of Human Duties that supercedes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights? And if the former is a practical absurdity, is not the latter also? Still, the philosophic cadaver of neutral liberalism continues to preside over the civil religion of the United States. Our cultural elites proudly proclaim the United States to be the first "universalist nation" and, in the name of human rights, to have the duty to remake the world, as much as possible, in its provincial image.

The communitarian critique of liberalism looked promising. Certainly, its negative critique is unanswerable, but as I read articles and listened to papers at the American Philosophical Association on what came to be called the "liberal-communitarian debate," I realized that the positive part of the critique was weak. Substantial human communities are typically not liberal. They stress virtue and duties over rights; they respect authority over autonomy; they are exclusive more than inclusive. I realized that most communitarians are not emancipated from liberalism and, consequently, are allergic to actual human communities. "Communitarism" is just another philosophical abstraction, as vacuous, in its own way, as the liberal "individualism" it has rightly criticized. What communitarians want is the warm feeling of solidarity and depth of character that is missing in liberal theory and practice, but without the hard and intrusive restraints of virtue. Communitarians are like those romantic Nietzscheans who admire the master morality of Greek and Roman aristocrats but cannot bear the disciplined way of life that made such characters possible.

If we wish to make the world safe for substantial moral communities, we must consider serious political alternatives to that master creation of liberalism, namely, the large-scale centralized state. The restoration of genuine federalism, radical decentralization, and even secession would enable communities of human scale to have sovereignty over their affairs. But this is not what most communitarians have in mind. Instead, the restoration of community is somehow to occur within the structure of the centralized liberal state—perhaps through the creation of a federal Department for the Restoration of Community, just as the need for reforms in education prompted creation of the Department of Education and the weakening of religion in public life (caused by the federal government) has led to federally subsidized "faith-based" programs.

The massive centralization of power built up over a century by liberal states exploded in World War I, leaving the social structure of Europe in shambles. This condition called forth searing criticisms of liberalism from fascists, national socialists, and communists. Though wildly different in other respects, they all claimed the project of restoring the social and communal life destroyed by liberalism. The most thoughtful of these critiques of liberalism were put forth by such Italian fascist writers as Giovanni Gentile, Mario Palmieri, and Afredo Rocco. But the attempt to map the idea of community—which, like the family, can function only on a human scale—onto a state made up of millions was a cruel, absurd, and destructive hoax. Liberals never tire of exposing the atavistic collectivism and tribalism of these movements, and their criticism is sound. What they fail to see, however, is that the centralized liberal state creates a political market for these ideologies. The very names "fascism," "socialism," and "communism" are reminders of the social nature of man that liberalism, in its obsession with autonomy, has not only forgotten but undermined. Millions of rootless people—however misguided—have responded to these ideologies for reasons that liberals ignore at their peril.

The sort of liberalism I have described is a creature of the mid-19th century. But there is an older liberalism, sometimes called "classical liberalism," that is quite different—the liberalism of the Founding Fathers, Hume, Tocqueville, and Lord Acton. It, too, valued individual liberty, but it also valued community and acknowledged the right of both in a highly decentralized federalism. Contrary to latter-day liberal ideology, America was not founded on a conception of radical individualism that, in Dworkin's words, could "trump" the claims of community but by small Protestant communities for whom self-government was second nature. By acknowledging (in the Bill of Rights) the sovereignty of the states and local jurisdictions over all powers not delegated to the central government, the U.S. Constitution afforded legal protection to communities to live out, across generations, their way of life. And just as a free society must be tolerant of the many heterogeneous—and even disagreeable—goods that people might pursue, so it must be tolerant of the heterogeneous ways of life that people *in community* might pursue. But no ideology that has gained control of the modern centralized state from the late 19th century on has exhibited much tolerance for substantial moral communities of human scale.

Such a decentralized federal order flourished in America, however, until challenged by the centralization initiated by the Civil War. Even so, it lingered on into the 20th century, generating strong regional cultures, economies, and substantial characters. And its memory can still guide political conduct. Running for mayor of New York City, Norman Mailer proposed that the city secede from the state and become the 51st state of the Union. This new state would allow substantial neighborhood sovereignty. Some neighborhoods, he suggested, might be theocratic and require religious attendance; others might be atheistic and prohibit the building of churches in their jurisdictions. Individuals, however, would be able to move and trade freely among jurisdictions.

Mailer is thought of as a man of the left, but his vision was not leftist, nor was it utopian. It was rooted in the actual practice of an older America. The division between left and right is a creature of the French Revolution and presupposes a centralized state of vast scale. It is essentially a quarrel over who will control that state. In the older America, the division was between Hamiltonian centralists and Jeffersonian decentralists. Mailer rightly understood the wisdom of Aristotle, who wrote that morally intrusive communities must be of human scale. A properly decentralized polity can and must be able to tolerate a great variety of what might be called "leftist" or "rightist" policies. Where they have no place is at the level of the leviathan state, because the scale is inappropriate. When liberals and conservatives who worship the centralized state start worrying about community, you should guard your wallet, and mothers should gather their children behind their skirts.

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Reactionary Radicals

RADICAL REACTIONARIES

Wheeler's Progress

Shutting Down "The Company"

by Justin Raimondo

On October 15, 1905, Burton K. Wheeler stepped off a train at the Northern Pacific depot in Butte, Montana, thinking that he had seen more of the West than Lewis and Clark but wondering if his luck had run out. After looking up every lawyer in town (Wheeler had graduated from the University of Michigan Law School) and receiving only one offer, he decided to go up to Spokane, Washington, on the grounds that he had never been there. On his way to the train station, he passed a saloon. Standing outside were two men dressed like respectable citizens and, as Wheeler described them, "oozing with geniality." Before he knew it, he was inside and deep in a poker game. A friendly game of cards turned out to be a complete loss for young Wheeler: Inside of a few hours, both the train and his savings were long gone. He had no choice but to stay in Butte—a quirk of fate that would have a major impact not only on the course of his own career but on the developing politics of the state of Montana.

Butte was a boomtown in the middle of mountains, the countryside denuded for 50 miles around; it was a jumble of soot-stained buildings, crisscrossed wires, and mountains of slag. "The Company," as Butte's citizens called the Anaconda Copper Company, dominated not only the town but the state: A gigantic smokestack, said to be the largest on earth, commanded the skyline, belching smoke and hellfire. In its shadow, the workers rose each morning and descended into the mines, more than 2,000 miles tunneled through the Butte mountains.

On average, one miner was killed or seriously injured each day; survivors were prone to "miner's con," a disease of the lungs that struck down many more in the long term. The politics of the state revolved around the feuds of the copper kings, who used the state and local governments (just as their employees used crowbars and dynamite) as weapons in the struggle over disputed mines.

By the time Burt Wheeler was first elected to the state legislature, these battles had been largely resolved in favor of The Company. Anaconda owned not only most of the state of Montana but both major political parties, the state legislature, the governor, and local officials down to the county level. The Company's leaders were used to getting their way, and they were not shy about paying off their friends and potential enemies. However, to their great consternation, Wheeler could not be bribed. Wheeler became a champion of miners and successfully proposed legislation protecting "workers' rights" and giving them the benefit of the doubt in personal-injury cases—but not without furious opposition from The Company.

Wheeler's political fortunes rose on a wave of left-populist sentiment symbolized by the Socialist Party's victory in Butte's 1911 city elections, when they elected their candidate for mayor along with a majority on the city council. The new mayor was inaugurated on a platform that he would close all dance halls in the red-light district, ban the sale of alcohol in "any place where there is traffic between the sexes," and regulate the prostitution business by requiring the girls to get regular checkups. The ten-dollar license fee collected by the city from practitioners of the world's oldest profession was promptly abolished.

This was hardly the socialism of Marx and Lenin but more the moralism of Carrie Nation mixed with the suffragette radicalism of Jeanette Rankin. Rankin, a Montana Republican and the first woman ever elected to Congress, was a staunch opponent of World War I, one of only 49 members of Congress to vote against entering the European maelstrom. The war had some pretty fearsome consequences in Montana. Stories of German spies in the state were common, and there was a great fuss raised about a possible attack from the Luftwaffe. There were numerous sightings of the airborne Hun, who was said to be dropping to earth in balloons; and if the newspapers of the time are to be believed, the hills of Montana were crawling with the Kaiser's legions. The immigrant miners, of course, were caught up in this hysteria, much of it based on ethnicity, and the Germans and Irish came under particular scrutiny. Union leaders were accused of sabotaging the war effort. The Montana Council of Defense, a group appointed by the Company-owned governor, assumed almost total power in the state—in the name of "winning the war," of course.

By this time, The Company had marginalized Wheeler in state politics. Still, he managed to get himself appointed state district attorney upon the resignation of the incumbent. As D.A., he felt called to defend the Non-Partisan League organizer who was beaten and driven out of town by a pro-war mob: Wheeler searched (in vain) for the murderers who dragged Frank Little—an IWW organizer who spoke out against the war—from his bed and hanged him from a railroad trestle in Butte. More than 2,500 mourners turned his funeral procession into an antiwar protest. When the editor of the *Butte Bul-*

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letin, Bill Dunn, thundered that "every man, woman and child knows that Company agents perpetrated this foulest of all crimes," he was accused of sedition. But Wheeler refused to prosecute him, just as he refused to prosecute all the other dissidents whose only crime was to take the U.S. Constitution seriously. The governor and his Council of Defense demanded that Wheeler crack down: Montana, they whined, had become a hotbed of sedition and high treason, and it was all his fault. Wheeler replied that free speech was no crime. This statement, and the antiwar views of his wife, Lulu, caused him a great deal of trouble. When Lulu was approached and asked to take the wheatless-sugarless pledge—a conservation measure designed to help the war effort—she steadfastly refused, citing her friend Jeanette Rankin's opinion that one ought not to deny her children wheat or sugar as long as it was still being used to make whiskey. This outraged the town gossips and local superpatriots, who soon spread the canard that the Wheelers were pro-German. The Council of Defense went on the warpath, and the newspapers joined in, demanding his resignation. Wheeler's life was threatened. While his wife stood by his side and his good friend, Sen. Thomas Walsh, offered to reappoint him despite the tremendous political pressure to dump him, Wheeler resigned and returned to the practice of law. The Company, it seemed, had beaten him; as it turned out, however, their victory was only temporary. Wheeler was soon up and running for office, this time for governor: He was determined to break Anaconda's death-grip on Montana politics.

Montana's Company-controlled press went ballistic. They called him "Bolshevik Burt" and accused him of everything from treason to advocating "the nationalization of women." Posters appeared all over the state showing a hand dripping with blood, over the caption: "Don't let this happen to Montana!" For all the red-baiting hysteria, however, Wheeler and his supporters in the Non-Partisan League were little more than good-government reformers. Wheeler's slogan, during his race for governor, was "If elected, I will not put Anaconda out of business, but I will put it out of politics." The slogan of the NPL candidates was "We are opposed to private ownership of public officials"—hardly a revolutionary call to overthrow the capitalist state. The Company, on the other hand, had used the alleged threat of sedition and "anarchy" to impose martial law on the state and crush all opposition: Anaconda's vision of *laissez-faire* capitalism was that The Company should be left alone to control not only the economy but the state government.

Wheeler's defeat in this election meant that The Company would retain control for a while longer. His friends and supporters in the Non-Partisan League urged him to run for the U.S. Senate in the 1922 elections, and, after a hard-fought campaign, he was elected by a large margin. He immediately joined the progressive caucus of the next Congress. When he arrived in Washington, he addressed the national Council of Progressives, made up of some 800 delegates, and spoke not only about the concerns of farmers—freight rates were too high; boxcars, too dear—but also hailed the call of the conference to release the free-speech prisoners who were still imprisoned as a result of the recent war hysteria. In so doing, he pointed out that he was acting as "a true conservative" would, explaining that the United States needed to return to the original letter and spirit of the Constitution, "from which we have wandered in recent times."

Wheeler's career in the Senate was immediately marked by a brashness that was very different from the complacent collegiality of that august body. His first major speech was a rip-roaring attack on Attorney General Harry M. Daugherty for protecting the profiteers of the Teapot Dome scandal. The Mammoth Oil Company had bribed Secretary of the Interior Albert B. Fall, who had been a Republican senator from New Mexico, to turn over public lands for private profit. Great tracts of Midwestern and California land had been bought up by the federal government in the name of "conservation"—but these were leased out secretly by the Department of the Interior to those "entrepreneurs" who were generous with their "loans." Secretary Fall raked in the cash, as did several others in the Harding administration, and the progressives, when the scandal was exposed, were up in arms, with Walsh, Wheeler, Robert La Follette, and a phalanx of Midwestern progressives taking the lead. Wheeler's investigations of the Teapot Dome scandal led to a vicious reprisal from the attorney general's office, which indicted him on the trumped-up charge of unlawfully using his influence to obtain oil and gas leases for one of his supporters.

The progressives won a moral and political victory in the wake of the Teapot Dome scandal and shook up the political landscape to such an extent that they threatened the two-party system. While the Republicans renominated Coolidge, the Democrats ignored Wheeler's forewarning of a progressive revolt and put up Morgan lawyer John W. Davis. Wheeler repudiated the national Democrats, and the progressives walked out of the party and put up Robert M. La Follette as the candidate of the newly formed Independent Progressive Party. Wheeler was drafted to run for vice president but initially refused. He did not think he had the national stature and had never ventured into such alien lands as New York, Boston, or Chicago.

Then, however, Wheeler received word that a second indictment against him was imminent but that the Justice Department lawyers would not release the charges if he declined to run. The progressive movement, although strong in the Democratic Party, was even more militant and pervasive in the Republican Party, especially out West, and the Republicans were convinced that a La Follette-Wheeler ticket would hurt them more than it would hurt the Democrats. Wheeler was so enraged by this threat that he told La Follette that he had changed his mind: He would run after all.

During that campaign, both Wheeler and La Follette offered up an array of nostrums—public power, government control of vast tracts of wilderness land—as a cure for the all-pervasive corruption of national politics. The government, it seemed, was for sale to the highest bidder. It never occurred to the progressives that the very instruments that were designed to "protect" consumers from monopolism and theft had been created by the same interests they were supposed to regulate.

Wheeler proved far less of a Midwestern naif when it came to foreign affairs. At an election event in San Francisco, a man rose to announce that, as a captain in the British army, he was very much interested to hear Wheeler's opinion of La Follette's antiwar stance. After La Follette voted against U.S. entry into World War I on the grounds that it served only the Morgan interests and the international bankers, the Wisconsin state legislature passed a resolution accusing the senator of being an agent of the Kaiser. Wheeler prefaced his reply by averring that "we have had too much British interest in our national affairs" and declaring that he had no apology to make for La Follette's antiwar stance. The American people, in electing Woodrow Wilson, had done so on account of his lying boast: "He kept us out

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of war." Besides, said Wheeler, he was not campaigning for the votes of English, Japanese, or any other foreign nationals, "but just Americans who believed in America." Wheeler records in his memoir that "this answer met with such wild cheering that I used the story again at an evening meeting and any other place I could figure out a way to drag it in."

When all the votes were in, the La Follette-Wheeler ticket had polled a little under five million votes, carrying Wisconsin and running ahead of Democratic nominee Davis in 12 states—all of them out West. In California, the ticket garnered 33 percent to Davis's eight percent; in Montana, the Independent Progressives achieved 39 percent of the vote, with Calvin Coolidge barely edging them out at 42.5 percent.

Wheeler returned to the Democratic Party, but he always emphasized the meaninglessness of party labels—or political-ideological labels of any kind—and took up the cudgel on behalf of a number of "liberal" causes, including the repeal of Prohibition and the fight against the Smoot-Hawley tariff. In the latter fight, Wheeler was the tribune of his agrarian constituents, who had to sell in a free market and buy in a protected one. Wheeler and his fellow "sons of the wild jackass"—as Sen. George H. Moses of New Hampshire characterized the progressive free-traders of both parties—saw themselves as the defenders of ordinary folk against the aristocrats of corporate privilege. Just as Wheeler had stood up to The Company in its demands for special privileges and subsidies from the state government back home in Montana, he opposed the machinations of the Eastern manufacturers and the various investment-banking institutions to enrich themselves.

Wheeler was one of the first Democrats to support Franklin Delano Roosevelt's presidential bid—in April of 1930, in a speech at the Democratic Party's Jefferson Day dinner—and also one of the first to turn against him once he became President. While Roosevelt made all the right liberal-progressive noises and seemed to empathize with the plight of the ordinary American in his famous fireside chats, his sort of progressivism was neither populist nor American. It took some time for the progressives of both parties to wake up to the danger posed by FDR, but when they did they were galvanized, and none more so than Burton K. Wheeler.

The debate over the National Recovery Act was the first real division between the formerly solid pro-New Deal progressives and the President. Whereas the old progressive goal of legislation had been to foster competition within a capitalist framework (and thereby protect the medium-to-small businessmen and the farmers from monopolist predators), the apparent aim of the NRA was to create giant cartels and stifle competition. Wheeler denounced the act as unworkable and undemocratic and saw in it the first inklings of a dangerous trend in the administration: a lust for centralized power.

The Wheelers' daughter, Elizabeth Wheeler Colman, tells the story of how, upon passage of the Agricultural Adjustment Act, Secretary of Agriculture and noted fellow traveler Henry A. Wallace presented her parents with two apple trees that he had hybridized. "They grew beautifully," she writes, "but bore no fruit. Mother thought that they symbolized the philosophy behind AAA." Here was a government agency that was authorized to pay hundreds of millions of dollars to farmers to slaughter animals, throw out milk, and *refrain* from planting crops. Wheeler, always on the lookout for corporate welfare schemes, could not help but notice that one sugar company alone received over a million dollars to keep its sugar off the market. Opposition to government largesse was hardly a new position for Wheeler: He had opposed Herbert Hoover's prelude to the New Deal, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, which had the power to extend all sorts of government-backed credits to railroads, banks, and insurance companies. Not all progressives saw it that way, however: Young Bob La Follette had supported the RFC because, as he confided to Wheeler, he was terrified of a crash. "Yes," said Wheeler, "and the sooner it's over the better. This will only prolong the depression." But the economy was not allowed to shake out the massive malinvestment that had been caused by credit expansion. The house of cards was built higher and higher, and the collapse, when it finally came, was catastrophic.

In the main, the Western bloc supported FDR as long as they thought he was just trying to get the country back on track. But there was one "emergency" measure that they could not support: FDR's court-packing scheme. When the NRA and the AAA were declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, the President retaliated by proposing a sweeping "reorganization" of the federal judiciary—which, among other things, involved granting himself the power to appoint a new Supreme Court justice for every member of the court who refused to retire after the age of 70. With six at that age or over, and with none of them planning on retiring, Roosevelt would get to pack the court with at least six more justices. It was a prescription for a presidential dictatorship, and Wheeler was appalled.

As long as the New Deal was seen as an emergency measure, a kind of insurance against the economic royalists taking advantage of the crisis to extend and cement their control of industry, the progressives had been reliable allies of FDR. But as soon as it became apparent that he and his Brain Trust were out for pure power and that they reveled in and even extended the economic downturn precisely because it empowered them, men like Wheeler began to turn against the administration.

Court historians endlessly quote the famous words of the President's plea to pass his court-packing scheme: "Here is one third of a nation ill nourished, ill clad, ill housed—now!" he thundered. "If we keep faith with those who had faith in us, if we would make democracy succeed I say we must act—now!" Wheeler commented that it was "the most demagogic speech [he] had ever heard," and what was frightening was that it was "coming from the President of the United States" instead of some strutting European would-be Caesar.

Wheeler's opposition and that of the other congressional progressives was a fatal blow to FDR's ambition: While he was inveighing against the "nine old men" as the virtual embodiments of economic royalism, the avowed enemies of plutocracy were siding with the conservatives! Roosevelt sent his emissary, Tommy Corcoran, to negotiate a deal, but Wheeler would have no truck with it. The President, said Corcoran, "doesn't care about those Tories being against it, but he doesn't want you to be against it."

Roosevelt and his supporters launched a tremendous propaganda campaign, with every sort of pressure brought to bear on senators to get them to vote in favor. Even some of Wheeler's own appointees wrote him letters, protesting his opposition to the President's plan. This had the opposite of its intended effect on Wheeler, whose personality was naturally averse to this insult to his incorruptibility, and he redoubled his efforts. Wheeler crippled the President's propaganda blitz and stopped the heretofore undefeated FDR dead in his tracks. He went to Jus-

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tice Louis Brandeis, who recommended that he take his case to Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes. Wheeler balked: He had opposed the appointment of Hughes, but Brandeis himself went to the phone, called up the Chief Justice, and handed the phone to Wheeler. Soon, Wheeler had a statement from the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, which he dropped like a bombshell in the congressional hearings on the bill. The sound of the explosion could be heard all over Washington, and the opposition carried the day—and the vote. When the Judiciary Committee reported unfavorably on the bill, one sentence stood out: "This is a measure which should be so emphatically rejected that its parallel will never again be presented to the free representatives of the free people of America." This may be one of Wheeler's most lasting achievements: No one has dared raise such a bill ever since.

The completion of the progressives' break with FDR and the New Deal came over the issue of intervention in Europe. As war clouds gathered on the European horizon and the New Dealers ran out of peacetime ways to spend themselves out of the Depression, Roosevelt increasingly looked abroad for the solution to his domestic political problems. Wheeler recalls a conversation between FDR and the First Lady in which the latter asked: "Franklin, when are you going to do something about unemployment?" The President ignored her, turning his attention to Wheeler. She repeated the question, to no avail. Finally, after a third inquiry, FDR turned to her and said: "My dear, if I knew I would have told you a long time ago. I'm going to try a little of this and a little of that and see what we come out with." Wheeler, in his memoir, notes that, in 1937, he related this story to a White House aide and was surprised by his comment: "Did it ever occur to you that there is no unemployment in wartime?"

Wheeler spoke out against the British attempt to lure us into protecting Western economic interests in Shanghai, arguing that "England's strong-arm policy in the Orient has failed, and if the US follows the advice of some of our pro-British citizens in the Orient, she will also fail." We could either get out of the way and let a moderate democratic regime take root in China or face the prospect that the country would go Bolshevik. Wheeler proved prescient, as he was on the question of the European war. There, too, the unintended consequences of our actions would produce a boomerang effect, and we would later have cause to regret it. If we had allowed Hitler and Stalin to fight it out, he believed, then "one would end in his grave, the other in the hospital, and the United States and the world would have been rid of two menacing tyrants."

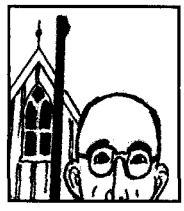
This was the crux of the Old Right's foreign-policy stance in the pre-war years, and it was the natural extension of the old progressive critique of dollar diplomacy, with the added feature of a growing anticommunism. When Wheeler was first elected to the Senate, he took a trip to Russia and returned thinking that perhaps the regime would soften and begin to moderate its repressive features. He thought recognizing the regime might help accomplish this. He came to realize, however, that communism was something different altogether, and by the time Hitler had invaded the Soviet Union and American leftists were demanding U.S. intervention to save the "worker's fatherland," Wheeler was completely disabused of the notion that the Soviets could be tamed or even tempered. In 1940, as we teetered on the brink of entering the war, Wheeler saw much further than most: "The United States," he said, "will undoubtedly enter the war with Germany and win. But mark my word, within ten years we will be asking Germany to assist the West in controlling Russia."

It was, of course, the Old Right's worst nightmare: By building up the Soviet Union, we were laying the foundations for a Cold War that would extend until 1989. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Wheeler did not give up the fight but kept on the administration's case, even lobbying for a negotiated peace. Why, he wanted to know, was the United States not making a deal with the anti-Hitler opposition in the German military? These heroic fighters against Nazism on the home front were haughtily dismissed by FDR and the pro-Soviet Harry Hopkins as "Prussian *junkers*" who had to be swept away along with Hitler. Yet they could have saved millions from dying after the Allied invasion of Europe by overthrowing Hitler before the Normandy landing and negotiating an end to the war. FDR, however, would not deal with the German underground and insisted on Germany's unconditional surrender—even against Stalin's advice.

In the postwar period, Wheeler was targeted by the left wing of the Democratic Party, the labor unions, the communists, and the big Eastern interests. Together, they succeeded in unseating him in 1946, after a smear campaign that made the one they waged against Charles Lindbergh look mild in comparison. The communists went to the trouble of having an entire book published and widely distributed throughout the state. *The Plot Against America: Senator Wheeler and the Forces Behind Him*, by David George Kin, reads as if the author wrote it during the course of a prolonged drinking binge. Indeed, in this work, Mr. Kin turned the run-on sentence into an art form. According to this screed, Wheeler was really a flunkie of The Company all along, not to mention a Nazi. The crudeness of the prose is matched by the crudeness of the illustrations, which show Wheeler in tow behind the Führer and Anaconda.

The communist-dominated labor unions had turned against Wheeler for his antiwar position and his outspoken anti-Russian stance, and in 1946, when he faced formidable opposition in the person of Leif Erickson, a former justice of the state supreme court, he underestimated the number, power, and determination of his numerous enemies. A longtime friend of Wheeler's in the miner's union said to him: "BK, just say something good about Russia. It will soften the union's opposition to you." Wheeler refused. Out-of-state money poured into his opponent's coffers, and in the end, Erickson barely won: The vote was 47,828 to 41,912. Wheeler's political career was over. He retired to practice law in Washington, where he died in 1975 at age 92.

Wheeler's progress from the champion of progressivism to the greatest enemy of the New Deal had shorn him of his leftist tinge and his taste for economic nostrums. He matured into something else: a healthy skeptic of all centralized power, whether public or private, and an opponent of war. Unlike the ex-communists and liberal Johnnys-come-lately of the postwar era, Wheeler did not fall for the Cold War version of interventionism. In his memoir, he writes that "the 'preventive war' urged by the 'radical right' recommends itself to me even less than intervention in prior wars." This ornery old progressive, who had stood up against The Company, had shed his left-liberal skin and made a similar stand against the Managerial State—this time, as an exemplar of the Old Right.



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Burnham Agonistes

by Samuel Francis

"Who says A must say B."

—James Burnham

James Burnham and the Struggle for the World: A Life
by Daniel Kelly
Wilmington, DE: ISI Books;
443 pp., $29.95

Jeff Drew

Most adult conservatives as well as many educated people know that James Burnham was an anticommunist author and columnist for William F. Buckley's *National Review*; a number of others will be aware that Burnham's name seems to flap through the corridors of early 20th-century American intellectual history, though they may not be able to explain just who he was or what he did.

Born in Chicago in 1905 to a well-off railroad executive, Burnham was educated at Princeton and Oxford and, by his 20's, had sprouted into a leading figure in literary criticism and philosophy among the New York *cognoscenti*. During the Depression, Burnham became a Marxist (of a sort) and a major presence in the Trotskyist movement. Breaking with the far left in 1940, he developed distinctive political theories of his own in *The Managerial Revolution* (1941) and *The Machiavellians* (1943) and acquired an increasing influence as a spokesman for a militantly anticommunist foreign policy in the late 1940's and 50's. After a brief period with the CIA, Burnham joined with Buckley at *National Review* and, for the next two decades, turned out a series of books, columns, and articles on both foreign-policy issues and conservative political theory until a stroke that impaired his memory ended his career in 1978. He died of cancer in 1987.

Although Burnham never attracted the kind of cultish following that Buckley and some of his colleagues at *National Review* encouraged, he was a far more significant figure in both the history of American conservatism and the intellectual history of the last century than most conservatives understood during his lifetime—or understand today. When the late Sen. John P. East, for whom I worked in the 1980's, was writing a book on the major conservative intellectuals of the 1950's, he was told by David Collier, then editor of *Modern Age*, not to bother with James Burnham because his thought was not worth the effort. Around the same time, when Adam Meyerson became editor of the Heritage Foundation's *Policy Review*, a member of the audience at his inaugural speech asked him a question that referred to Burnham, and it became embarrassingly clear that Meyerson had never heard of the man. That was while Burnham was still alive but only a few years after he had ceased writing for *National Review*. The situation has not improved much since then, among either "orthodox" conservatives such as East and Collier or neoconservatives such as Meyerson, but that is largely because of their own limitations. In fact, there has been a fairly steady flow of studies and essays on Burnham's thought in recent years.

With all due respect to the concern expressed by Daniel Kelly in his preface to this first full-scale biography of James Burnham, there is little reason to believe that Burnham is in danger of sinking into obscurity—let alone that Mr. Kelly's work is the rope that will drag him from the abyss. Several of Burnham's major works have been reissued by the Regnery

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Gateway Company (albeit with what seem to be now obligatory forewords by neoconservatives such as Sidney Hook and Newt Gingrich, who actually attack or distance themselves from the ideas of the very books they are introducing), while Burnham's life and thought have been the subjects of two monographs (my own, recently reissued in a revised format by a British publisher, and one by academic Kevin Smant) as well as of a number of extended discussions in essays or chapters by John P. Diggins, George Nash, Paul Gottfried, John Judis, Christopher Hitchens, James Gilbert, John O'Sullivan, Gary Dorrien, and Justin Raimondo, among others (not to mention such nonresidents of oblivion as George Orwell, Benedetto Croce, C. Wright Mills, and Raymond Aron). Indeed, with the exception of Whittaker Chambers and Friedrich Hayek, Burnham by now has probably been more widely discussed than any other conservative thinker of his era.

Mr. Kelly's biography is based mainly on Burnham's published writings as well as his papers, now archived at the Hoover Institution, and he offers a wealth of obscure but important information about Burnham's social and educational background and his early years in the Marxist and postwar anticommunist movements. What is far more problematic about Mr. Kelly's book, however, is the interpretation he imposes on Burnham's political thought.

The main view he advances, as he tells us about halfway through, is that

> despite differences on particular issues, his [Burnham's] general stance—secular, empirical, modernist, resigned to the welfare state as inevitable in a mass industrial society, emphatic on the need for victory in the struggle for the world—afforded a preview of the neo-conservatism of the 1970s.

Mr. Kelly repeats and somewhat expands upon this interpretation at the end of his book, citing in particular the similar view expressed by *National Review* editor Richard Brookhiser. (Although Professor Smant advanced much the same interpretation some years before Brookhiser did, his views are never mentioned.) Some of Burnham's political beliefs, Mr. Kelly writes, "foreshadowed neoconservatism in its early phase," while his mode of argument—that of a secular and empirically minded social scientist rather than that of a deductive moralist—also resembled that of the neoconservatives, as did the low-key tone of most of his writings. Moreover, like the neoconservatives, he called for adamant resistance to the USSR and communism. Finally, though he defended tradition, his cultural sensibility was modernist.

Sad to say, the logic of this interpretation is deeply flawed, and the actual content of Burnham's thought and writing fairly contradicts it. In the first place, arguing that, because Burnham's thought and "mode of argument" were "secular," he therefore resembles the (also secular) neoconservatives is rather like saying that, because Hilaire Belloc was a religiously oriented thinker, he foreshadows Jerry Falwell and the Christian Right. "Secular" and "empirical" argumentation are no more distinctive of the neoconservatives than religious commitment is distinctive of the Falwell legions. Nor are some of the other attributes Mr. Kelly ascribes to the neoconservatives either real or, if real, unique to them: for instance, a "low-key tone" (consider for example, neoconservatives such as Charles Krauthammer denouncing Pat Buchanan) or "adamant resistance to the USSR and communism" (Frank Meyer, Whittaker Chambers, Willi Schlamm, Joe McCarthy, and Buckley himself, among many other 1950's conservatives, held the same views long before the neoconservatives discovered them, if in fact they ever did).

To anyone at all familiar with Burnham's writing and thought, the Smant-Brookhiser-Kelly thesis that Burnham approximated neoconservatism in the 1970's is simply preposterous; Mr. Kelly is able to sustain this claim only by blatantly skimming over, dismissing, or simply ignoring most of Burnham's writings that do not fit the neoconservative "foreshadowing" on which he insists. Thus, Burnham's most paleoconservative work, *Congress and the American Tradition* (1959), receives only brief and shallow treatment from Mr. Kelly, in contrast to his much more extensive consideration of Burnham's anticommunist trilogy of the 1940's and 50's. Mr. Kelly ignores Burnham's critique of Abraham Lincoln (a neoconservative hero) as an architect of presidential "Caesarism" and also his brilliant synthesis of neo-Machiavellian theorists, such as Gaetano Mosca, with the *Federalist* and John C. Calhoun (a neoconservative demon). Nor is it clear how firmly Mr. Kelly grasps what Burnham was talking about in the book: Had Burnham "foreshadowed" neoconservatism, he would not have championed Congress at the expense of the presidency. (Even under Clinton, most neoconservatives continued to defend the power of the executive branch against assertions of a significant congressional role in foreign policy.)

Mr. Kelly is also uneasy dealing with what is probably Burnham's best-known and most influential book among "orthodox" conservatives, *Suicide of the West*, which he calls "the most uneven of Burnham's works." His account of the book is, in some respects, simply mistaken. Thus, he writes, Burnham's

> version of liberalism has no room for liberals who did not fit his model—his fellow Augustinian Reinhold Niebuhr, for example, a complex figure . . . whose view of the world was hardly less doleful than Burnham's.

Burnham does not discuss Niebuhr specifically in *Suicide*, but he does acknowledge a subspecies of liberalism similar to the kind that Niebuhr tried to articulate, as represented by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., in *The Vital Center*, Max Lerner, and Charles Frankel, whose writings ostensibly sought to accommodate a more pessimistic and irrationalist view of human nature than the mainstream liberalism Burnham argued was more typical. His answer to these liberal pessimists was that, while renouncing conventional liberal optimism in theory, they were generally forced to embrace it in practice in order to justify liberal policies and principles.

Mr. Kelly also wonders, "[g]iven his usual linking of liberalism to the managerial revolution his failure even to mention that trend is puzzling." But, as I argued in the chapter on *Suicide of the West* in my monograph, Burnham subtly presents liberalism as the ideology or political formula of the managerial class, while the text as a whole can be read as a kind of Paretian dissection of a "derivation" (ideology) in terms of the underlying psychic and social needs that liberal ideology serves. The conventional criticism of *Suicide of the West*—that its por-

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trait of liberalism as embodying an inherent suicidal tendency is "overdrawn" or a "caricature" (a view Mr. Kelly seems to share)—founders on the subsequent general history of liberalism. No action that liberals and liberalism have since taken—against communism, against Third World anti-Western forces, or against internal criminal, subversive, or "multiculturalist" threats—has challenged Burnham's characterization in the least. What Mr. Kelly is quite unable to see is that this liberal "death wish" was at least implicit in the New Deal-Great Society liberalism that was Burnham's main target in the book. Despite the obsolescence of some of its anticommunist references, *Suicide of the West* remains more relevant than ever—although today its warning applies to neoconservatism itself as much as to the 1960's liberalism from which neoconservatism sprang.

Finally, Mr. Kelly simply ignores entirely several articles and reviews that Burnham wrote in the late 1960's or early 70's that explicitly reject or contradict any tendency toward neoconservatism. These include a savage review of Norman Podhoretz's *Making It* in 1968, a fulsome endorsement of John Murray Cuddihy's *Ordeal of Civility* in 1975, and—most important—a withering critique of neoconservatism as it was emerging in 1972.

The last of these was part of an exchange in *National Review* with neoconservative Peter Berger, who had criticized conservatives for what he called their "selective humanism" and lack of compassion. Burnham argued that, while Berger and other neoconservatives (including "a good many of those who write for the magazines *Commentary* and *The Public Interest*") shared a "break with liberal doctrine, which they find both intellectually bankrupt and, by and large, pragmatically sterile in the present and unfolding situation," they also had in common a "retention" of what Burnham called "the emotional gestalt of liberalism, the liberal sensitivity and temperament"—in other words, the emotional knee-jerks and neurological reflexes of the left. In particular, they retained the liberal attachment to universalism. "When we start talking about 'humanism,'" Burnham wrote,

> . . . we tend to think in terms not of individual men but of Man: of Man or Mankind, the abstraction, the Universal; of men only insofar as they are members of the class, Man. This is the way liberal ideology conceives men, and it is through this conception that liberal rationalism deduces its universalistic imperatives and its equalitarian tendencies.

Retaining the *gestalt* of universalism, Burnham predicted, the neoconservatives probably would not evolve much further toward an authentic conservatism, which he believed was characterized by its rejection of universalism and its affirmation of "selectivity" and particularism. "Selectivity is a built-in feature of conservatism," he wrote, and "conservatives *are* tribal—let us not pretend on this score."

> Conservatives are not indifferent to family, home, neighborhood, party, community, church, school, country, to all the interlinked ties that form man's existential context. They do not, like rationalists, dismiss these ties as prejudice and superstition, but find the meaning of human life in and with and through them. At heart (and the heart, too, has its reasons) even the most sophisticated conservatives are peasants, Norman Rockwell types.

In 1967, Burnham had expressed similar skepticism of universalism. "There is no Humanity," he wrote:

> that is to say, actual human beings, though they may share a metaphysical and theological identity, do not in point of fact have common psychological, social and historical traits that link them into an operative social grouping that we may name "Humanity." In real life men are joined on a much less than universal scale into a variety of groupings—family, community, church, business, club, party, etc.—which on the political scale reach the maximum significant limit in the nation.

In fact, what Burnham wrote about the neoconservatives' retention of the *gestalt* of liberal universalism not only clearly demonstrates his distancing of himself from the neoconservatism of the 1970's but is perhaps the most profound insight into it that has ever been penned. The dominance of the universalist *gestalt* within neoconservatism remains to this day, as evidenced by the neoconservative commitment to the concept of a "credal nation" or a "proposition country" that denies or ignores the "interlinked ties" and "existential context" on which Burnham insisted as the distinctive trait of conservatism, as well as by neoconservative support for the logical implications of political universalism: attachment to mass immigration, embrace of a "color-blind society" and the glorification of Martin Luther King, Jr., as its champion, and preoccupation with a universalist democratic globalism as the morally imperative agenda for American foreign policy. Burnham's affirmation of particularism, on the other hand, distinctly separates him philosophically from neoconservatism and places him in much the same tradition as such counterrevolutionary theorists of the right as Joseph de Maistre—"But there is no such thing as *man* in the world. During my life, I have seen Frenchmen, Italians, Russians, and so on . . . as for *man*, I have never come across him anywhere; if he exists, he is completely unknown to me"—and Oswald Spengler ("'Mankind' is a zoological expression").

Indeed, Mr. Kelly is at some pains to explain away Burnham's views and remarks, throughout his career, about nonwhite and non-Western societies and peoples. In the 1960's, Burnham defended segregation on pragmatic and constitutional (though not explicitly racial) grounds and, by the 70's, was suggesting actual racial separation of blacks in a "non-contiguous" area accorded "limited sovereignty." He also defended both Rhodesia and South Africa, as well as other right-wing states (he was one of the first to distinguish between "totalitarian" and "authoritarian" regimes), and by the 1960's perceived that, in Mr. Kelly's description,

> For centuries the peoples of Asia and Africa had been "historically inert," while Europeans and their overseas descendants—the "whites"—had been "the historically dynamic portion of mankind," imposing their rule on the greater part of the world. Now Asians and Africans had awakened and "moved historically on stage." The whites, who formed only a small minority of the human race and whose elite had "lost [its] nerve,"

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thus faced a mortal challenge: how were they to preserve their privileged status?

Burnham's thoughts on the subject are almost identical, in fact, to Lothrop Stoddard's warning 50 years earlier in *The Rising Tide of Color*—but they are definitely *not* suggestive of neoconservatism.

Mr. Kelly is thus simply wrong to portray Burnham as a precursor of neoconservatism (indeed, few of the standard accounts of the emergence of neoconservatism even mention Burnham as an influence, nor do many neoconservatives claim him as one). It is also clear, however, that Burnham was neither an "orthodox" conservative of the 1950's and 60's nor what is now known as a "paleoconservative" in any strict sense. His commitment to *laissez-faire* economics and the "free market" was too vague for the one; his hostility to "isolationism" and his insistence on U.S. interventionism and even "empire," too firm for the other. It is quite true, as Mr. Kelly points out, that Burnham's support for Medicare, against most other conservatives at *National Review*, his favoring of Eisenhower over Taft and Nelson Rockefeller over Nixon as well as Goldwater, and his occasional other "heresies" (such as sympathy for Robert McNamara) all separated him from the "conservative mainstream" then and from most paleos now. Yet even these "deviations" do not amount to "a preview of the neo-conservatism of the 1970s."

Burnham's idiosyncratic synthesis of "modernism" (*i.e.*, secularism, historicism, and a good deal of amoralism drawn from Machiavelli) with what Mr. Kelly accurately characterizes as his "Augustinian" pessimism regarding human nature, society, and history is distinctive of what, in a 1987 essay (reprinted in my *Beautiful Losers*), I called Burnham's "anti-modern modernism" or "counter-modernism." It is probably this position that William Barrett thought Burnham was trying, in 1948, to define as "a new political stance, one beyond the conventional categories of Left and Right"—a stance that is as removed from the neoconservatism of the 1970's as it is from the conservative orthodoxies of the 50's and 60's that Burnham rejected.

In my view, although most of Burnham's analysis of communism and his assessment of its threat was substantially correct, he wasted much of his later career in what turned out to be rather ephemeral anticommunist polemics that had little impact on actual policy after the early 1950's. Burnham would have served modern political theory far better, and his reputation would be far more secure, had he devoted that part of his life to formulating more explicitly a "new political stance" within the framework of neo-Machiavellian elite theory and to the closely related project of exploring more deeply the political and social implications of the managerial revolution. Mr. Kelly also might have devoted more attention to these implications, as well as to the influence of Burnham's first book on such thinkers as Karl Wittfogel, Milovan Djilas, and Jacques Ellul.

If James Burnham made one basic error, it was in his insistence on a political strategy for the American right (as embodied in *National Review*) that sought to influence and persuade the dominant (managerial) class and its verbalist and intellectual spokesmen, rather than formulating a more populist (and more radically conservative) strategy aimed at the displacement or overthrow of the managerial system. It was probably that strategy that accounts for much of Burnham's support for Medicare, Rockefeller, and McNamara. By the late 1960's, however, he seems to have recognized the bankruptcy of the managerial class and to have turned more sympathetically toward a populist and explicitly antimanagerial strategy. Yet, by following the strategy they formulated in the 1950's, he and Buckley effectively cut the "respectable" American right away from grassroots support and isolated it in Manhattan. Without a firm social and political base separate from, and opposed to, the managerial class, *National Review*'s conservatism brought little social power to the bargaining table. Hence, it could acquire "influence" not by mounting an effective resistance to the apparatus of the managerial intellectual class from without but only by gradually assimilating itself within the apparatus. That is essentially what neoconservatism accomplished through its domination of the right. While Burnham lived, assimilation could not take place completely, but it is significant that neoconservatism began to devour the American right (and especially *National Review*) almost as soon as he vanished from the conservative scene.

Mr. Kelly has produced a well-researched book that needed to be written and that answers many biographical questions that students of James Burnham have long wanted answered (though it remains weak in answering others, such as those regarding Burnham's activities with the CIA). His analysis of his subject's political and philosophical thought, however, is simply not reliable. To understand it properly, readers will have to go to James Burnham's works themselves—and to examine them without the neoconservative goggles that Mr. Kelly insists they wear.

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Royal Teddy

by Clyde Wilson

Theodore Rex
by Edmund Morris
New York: Random House;
772 pp., $35.00

The Selected Letters of Theodore Roosevelt
edited by H.W. Brands
New York: Cooper Square Press;
656 pp., $32.00

◆

Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., was the first of our Northeastern rich-boy presidents, blazing a trail for his kinsman Franklin, John F. Kennedy, and the two Bushes. Even Nelson Rockefeller, who had no abilities and no popularity that was not bought and paid for, ended up a heartbeat from the executive mansion. TR was also the first president to market himself as a personality. A colorful and energetic man, head of the U.S. government at the dawn of the 20th century and at the high tide of the "Progressive" era, he played a decisive role in the creation of the America that we inhabit today.

If you are one of those who suffer from that strange, widespread American folk delusion that presidents are intrinsically interesting and that their daily thoughts and actions are subject for retelling, then *Theodore Rex* is the book for you. His administrations (1901-1909) are given a thoroughly researched account at the level of good popular history or journalism. Many readers will appreciate the close look not only at Roosevelt but at many other public characters of the period.

The author is, to my taste, a bit too eager to prove Roosevelt right on every occasion. He wants us to accept TR as an early racial liberal, a characterization he supports by giving a few incidents greater importance than they had at the time. Roosevelt was, after all, a believer in the White Man's Burden. And if he behaved more generously toward black people than many at the time were willing to do, that was not a terribly unusual thing.

I thought I knew a good deal about TR already, yet I only truly began to understand the man by perusing H.W. Brands' collection of selected letters. Though I would like to have seen a little more information about his editorial practices, Brands has chosen an interesting and seemingly representative sample of private correspondence written by Roosevelt from the age of ten until his death, as he stood chafing on the sidelines of World War I.

By "private," the editor does not mean merely personal but something expressive of private thoughts, often about public matters, and even philosophical waxings. Though somewhat hampered by wealth and a Harvard education, TR really tried to understand, and act constructively in, the world that existed. His motives were consistent—he desired constructive reform to adjust to new conditions without destructive radicalism. Whether his actions were appropriate to his goals is doubtful. His "trust-busting," for instance, was certainly made in ignorance of economics (though, come to think of it, ignorance of economics might be an advantage in economic-policy decisions).

Perhaps inevitably for a man of intense action, Roosevelt did not grow very much intellectually, but he kept learning. A 1906 letter to his friend Owen Wister, on the subject of Wister's novel *Lady Baltimore*, shows a man reading and thinking with some range, if not much depth. Neither FDR nor JFK could have written such a letter. Teddy Kennedy and George W. Bush would not even understand it. The great flaw of monarchy is that dynasties run down, and our American royals are no exception.

The Progressive Era was the seedbed for the century that followed. It is an endlessly fascinating and multifarious bit of history that could well occupy a lifetime of study. Nearly every controlling assumption and policy of today was formulated or anticipated in Progressive thinking or in its natural culmination, American intervention in World War I. I suspect that TR would be pleased with the American empire of today, except for its multicultural aspect. (Multiculturalism was invented in the 1930's by European totalitarians.)

For me, the most important question that an historian can bring to the period is why the United States abandoned all its traditions and vigorously entered into the imperial competition for the regulation of the globe. The imperial impulse led Theodore Roosevelt, *qua* historian, to write silly books that portrayed the Southwestern frontiersmen of the pioneer period as forerunners of the imperialists who wanted to dominate China. (His books were not nearly as silly as Woodrow Wilson's non-books, however. Wilson had a Ph.D. and was a professional educator.)

We can explain American entrance—frequently enthusiastic entrance—into the hideous world power scramble and the insane mayhem of the European war in many ways. Big banking interests and the dishonesty and shallowness of politicians no doubt played a part (as they do in every significant public question), but that alone is not, I believe, a sufficient explanation.

As far as I can tell, the American people never wished for their government to become the world's policeman. It was the ruling class that longed to intervene, whether they were, according to Joseph Stromberg's apt classification, cooperative imperialists like Wilson or unilateral imperialists like Henry Cabot Lodge. Something—an aggressive sense of nationalism (that replaced patriotism), reasonable or unreasonable fear of the other armed powers of the world, a perverted Calvinist impulse to correct unrighteous nations—made the American ruling class leap enthusiastically into the fiery doom of worldwide war.

Reading the letters of Theodore Roosevelt gives some insight into the mindset of the folks who made that critical choice, the ultimate expression of which we are now perhaps seeing in the imperial "New World Order." They give some insight, but they do not really explain. Perhaps the explanation is simply that power corrupts, and what corruption can be more tempting than the dream of benevolent global command?

Clyde Wilson is a member of the historical profession, but probably not for much longer.

LIBERAL ARTS

SLOUCHING TOWARD GOMORRAH

"Hal Sparks, costar of the . . . Showtime series *Queer as Folk*, tells *TV Guide* that kissing another man proved to be something of a challenge. "It couldn't be weirder . . . I get a lot of crap for saying this, but it's a little like kissing a dog . . . So as an actor, it's a unique challenge, because you've got to bring it from someplace, make it convincing."

—*from the October 17, 2001, issue of* TV Guide

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Sic Semper Tyrannis

by H.A. Scott Trask

The Real Lincoln: A New Look at Abraham Lincoln, His Agenda, and an Unnecessary War
by Thomas J. DiLorenzo
Roseville, CA: Prima Publishing;
308 pp., $24.95

◆

Abraham Lincoln remains the central historical figure in modern America; the only others who can compete with him in their influence on the present and the degree of adulation accorded them are Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the Rev. "Dr." Martin Luther King, Jr. Lincoln is praised for having accomplished two things: preserving the Union and freeing the slaves. The more sophisticated of Lincoln's defenders claim that he also "refounded" the Union. True, but on what set of principles? Neoconservative defenders of Lincoln have performed philosophical somersaults, maintaining that Lincoln was simultaneously a conservative and a progressive, that he preserved the Union even while transforming it, and that he had to violate the Constitution in order to save it. Thomas J. DiLorenzo's outstanding new book exposes these paradoxes as the ridiculous rationalizations they always were. He does so by concentrating on Lincoln's actions rather than his words. DiLorenzo's main theme is that Lincoln represented a militant and extreme incarnation of a certain statist tradition in American history. Lincoln's political centralism, disregard for constitutional limitations, and mercantilism were Hamiltonian. Lincoln differed from his predecessor chiefly because he succeeded in transforming the republic along these lines.

On what principles, then, did Lincoln refound the Union? DiLorenzo identifies four of them: political centralization; state capitalism; anticonstitutionalism; and warfare as an acceptable instrument of moral and political reform. However, he misses two of great importance—ideological nationalism and political messianism/pharisaism—and he denies a third: racial egalitarianism. DiLorenzo can marshal all the racist and pro-black-colonization statements Lincoln ever made, but that does not change the historical realities that, because of Lincoln and his party, slavery was abolished; blacks (and potentially all other people of color) were made citizens; and suffrage was extended to the freedmen. For these, Lincoln will remain a hero in the eyes of progressives.

DiLorenzo details at length how Lincoln, a former Whig and disciple of Henry Clay, used the war—and the near-total power that it invested in him—as a means of enacting the Whig mercantilist program of high tariffs, national banking, public debt, and government subsidies for big business. Lincoln had always believed in this program, and he was not about to allow the secession of the Southern states to frustrate its long-awaited fulfillment. If DiLorenzo can be faulted here, it is for failing to explain how the Republicans masked their program of corporate welfare and privilege with false rhetoric about protecting American labor, defending free soil, fighting for the common man, etc. It is remarkable how little the Republicans have changed in 150 years. While the rhetoric has shifted, their true constituency remains the same.

For the leading lights of the historical profession as well as the punditocracy, Lincoln remains a mythological figure whose greatness, essential goodness, and heroism go unquestioned. They tolerate no independent analysis or revisionism; instead, they fiercely guard a set of axioms: The North was right, the South was wrong; the cause of the war was slavery and only slavery; the war was inevitable; the Southern "rebellion" was wicked and had to be crushed; secession was unconstitutional; Northern methods of war were moral, appropriate, and necessary to victory; Lincoln's economic policies ushered in a modern industrial society of unprecedented wealth. Through the marshalling of evidence and reasoned argument, DiLorenzo refutes them all.

DiLorenzo shatters five persistent myths about the period. First myth: "The war was caused by slavery." DiLorenzo reveals that, whatever factors motivated the South to secede, ending slavery and racial injustice was *not* why the North chose to fight. On the contrary, Northern elites waged war to restore the territorial integrity of the Union, regain federal tariff revenue, and prevent a free-trade confederation from surviving on their southern border.

Second myth: "Lincoln preserved the Union." The Union was formed as a voluntary association of coequal and sovereign states. Lincoln destroyed this Union, substituted coercion for consent, and transformed a confederation of states into a unitary republican empire.

Third myth: "The North was fighting for the American principle of self-government." The opposite was true. The North went to war to extirpate the right and practice of self-government, not only in the 11 states of the Confederacy but in the four border states as well, in each of which Lincoln overthrew the elected local governments and imposed military rule.

Fourth myth: "War was necessary to end slavery." DiLorenzo disposes of this fallacy with a single devastating question: Why was the United States the only country in the 19th century that had to resort to war to end slavery? That it was ended in this way, rather than through peaceful reform, should be a cause for shame, not pride.

Fifth myth: "The war was just and moral." It was just and moral only if you consider the burning and looting of private homes, farms, and plantations, the sacking of cities, the theft of private property, widespread rape (of both black and white women), and the execution of civilians just and moral. As DiLorenzo points out, centuries of Western legal and moral tradition had condemned such methods of warfare, even when the war itself was justified. By making deliberate war on civilians, Lincoln placed himself outside the canon of Western Christian civilization.

DiLorenzo will be criticized for relying mostly on secondary sources and for the polemical tone of his book, which nevertheless is far more historical and logical than most contemporary volumes on the subject. Historians and pundits tend to wander into the fogs of mysticism and abstraction when discussing Lincoln and the war. They rarely define liberty, equality, democracy, the Union, the Constitution, or the nation; instead, they conflate these various abstractions and make Lincoln their great champion. Not so with DiLorenzo, who gives specific content to these terms and shows how the Great Emancipator was the inveterate foe of each and every one of them.

H.A. Scott Trask is an American historian working on a book on Northern opposition to President Lincoln during the War Between the States.

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Yes, Virginia, There Is a Good English-Latin Dictionary

by Thomas Fleming

Smith's English-Latin Dictionary
by William Smith and Theophilus D. Hall
Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers; 754 pp., $79.95

◆

Bolchazy-Carducci is one of those little success stories that can happen "only in America." Where else could a Latinist, who once studied for the priesthood, start a publishing firm devoted to putting out teaching aids for Latin teachers and end up with a catalogue that includes the most successful computer instruction series on Latin (*Artes Latinae*), a Latin version of *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, and a popular classical journal—to say nothing of the best list of Slovak books in the United States? Browsing through their amazing catalogue (online at *www.bolchazy.com*) is a bit like taking a stroll through "The Old Curiosity Shoppe": You never know what you are going to find. Many homeschoolers and schoolteachers have found their way to Bolchazy-Carducci. Many more should follow their example.

Several recent B-C productions are valuable additions to the professional or amateur classicist's library. Among a long list, I mention only two: a very useful CD by Waldo Sweet (creator of *Artes Latinae*); and *Words of Wisdom From the Ancients: 1000 Latin Proverbs*, a compendium of Latin *sententiae*, is not only a helpful collection of Roman wisdom and a useful aid to building Latin vocabulary, but a boon to the writer and editor who may occasionally forget the phrasing or source of a Latin tag. (B-C's *World Dictionary of Foreign Expressions* might be even more useful, though I have only had a chance to see, not to peruse, the volume.)

B-C also publishes collections of articles on a variety of ancient topics, such as the poetry of Vergil. *Rome and Her Monuments* contains helpful articles on Roman topography by Harry Evans and Hugh Lee as well as interesting observations on Roman literature by Jane Whitehead and Helen North and a variety of generally sensible explications of the Roman inheritance.

Perhaps the most important volume issued in the past year is a reprint of Smith's English-Latin Dictionary. (To be precise, this is a reprint of the 1871 American edition of Sir William Smith's and Theophilus Hall's *A Copious and Critical English-Latin Dictionary*.) Why is an English-Latin dictionary so valuable? The answer is simple. Speaking as a former teacher of Latin, I have to say that the most important—and most neglected—part of Latin instruction is writing in Latin. At the introductory level, this means that Latin vocabulary (indeed, the vocabulary of *any* foreign language) should be learned from English to Latin. Any fool, without a day's instruction, might guess that *aqua* means "water," but only a Latin student, when asked the Latin word for water, can answer: "*aqua*, *aquae*, feminine."

At higher levels, the problem becomes one of Latin composition, and since even good students cannot remember everything and are unlikely to know, for example, the words for (opening the book at random to pp. 340-41) "gizzard," "glare," "glass," or "gleam," he (more likely she, these days) needs to be able to consult a good English-Latin dictionary. Most Latinists would agree that such a book does not, in fact, exist, and that is why we have to fall back on Smith, which, for all its faults and slapdash criteria (some of which are pointed out in Dirk Sacre's useful introduction to this edition), is still the best thing going. In my previous life as a Latin teacher, I never actually owned a copy of Smith and had to use it in the library. Now, no first-year Latin teacher has an excuse for not owning it.

Recent additions to the B-C catalogue include a selection of Seneca's *Moral Epistles*, a bilingual edition of Francis Church's editorial "Yes, Virginia, There Is a Santa Claus," a source guide to ancient Rome, and a volume entitled *The Unknown Socrates*, which provides *testimonia* (in translation) with comment from late antiquity on the life and teachings of Socrates. At *Chronicles*, we intend to do a better job of informing our readers of the books and resources that can help them to pursue a lifetime of self-education. In the meantime, they can either check out the online edition of the Bolchazy-Carducci catalogue or write to 1000 Brown St., Unit 101, Wauconda, Illinois 60084.

Thomas Fleming is the editor of Chronicles *and president of The Rockford Institute.*

The Realms of Gold

by Jeffrey Meyers

Gustav Klimt: Modernism in the Making
edited by Colin Bailey
New York: Harry Abrams; 239 pp., $60.00

◆

In Vienna, during the decade before the Great War, an astounding concentration of creative genius coincided with the final stages of political collapse. The work of Hofmannsthal, Musil, Broch, Schnitzler, Kraus, Werfel, and Zweig in literature; Mahler, Wolf, and Schönberg in music; Krafft-Ebing and Freud in psychology; Wittgenstein and Buber in philosophy; Schiele and Kokoschka in art: These suggested that Austria had achieved self-awareness at the very moment of dissolution. As Musil wrote: "Yes, maybe Kakania [Austria] was, despite much which speaks to the contrary, a country for geniuses; and probably that is another reason that it succumbed."

Vienna represented a state of mind in a state of siege. As the monarchy tottered toward extinction, it desperately maintained the trappings of empire that emphasized social pretense and external appearances, elaborate titles and gradations of power. The traditional Austrian attitudes—sentimentality, nostalgia, lighthearted aestheticism, love of spectacle, fondness for the countryside, indifference to social reform, and passivity toward bureaucracy—mingled uneasily with more modern currents: the protests against censorship and rigid sexual conventions, the alienation of intellectuals and a high suicide rate, the nationalist and antisemitic movements. Karl Kraus ironically called Austria, with its quixotic mixture of repression and freedom, "an isolation cell in which one was allowed to scream."

The most brilliant artist produced by this paradoxical background was Gustav Klimt (1862-1918). Like Freud, he tried

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to free sexuality from the constraints of a normative culture and portrayed women engaging in lesbian love and erotic ecstasy. The son of a gold-engraver from a lower-middle-class suburb of Vienna, he had only an elementary-school education, but was well trained at the School of Applied Arts. Though he produced 230 paintings and 4,000 drawings, he was notoriously reluctant to speak about himself, his technique, or his art. He was mainly supported by wealthy Jewish patrons and became infatuated with the teenaged Alma Schindler, who later married Mahler, Gropius, and Werfel. Though deeply attached to his favorite model, Emilie Flöge, he fathered 14 children with various women.

This sumptuous catalogue (with 330 illustrations, including 190 in full color), prepared for an exhibition at the National Gallery of Art in Ottawa, traces Klimt's astonishing stylistic transformation from a traditional 19th-century academic painter to a celebrator of unreality in the Keatsian "realms of gold." In 1923, a perceptive critic wrote that Klimt

> is conceivable only in Vienna, better still in Budapest or Constantinople. His spirit is entirely Oriental. Eroticism plays a dominant role in his art, and his taste for women is rather Turkish. He is inspired by the decoration of Persian vases and oriental carpets, and especially delights in the gold and silver of his canvases.

The catalogue, after a brief introduction, presents essays by diverse hands on Klimt's conflict between tradition and modernism, his seismic reputation, his use of applied arts, his drawings, a complete description of the 36 paintings in the exhibition (which repeats information from the essays), and an extensive chronology and bibliography. Several of the essays, translated from the German academic style, are learned but rather heavy-going.

Klimt was the leader of the *fin-de-siècle* Secession movement—the Austrian equivalent of German *Jugendstil*, French *art nouveau*, and English Aestheticism. During the first decade of the 20th century, he produced an impressive, and often controversial, series of masterpieces. Commissioned by the University of Vienna to do an allegorical painting of Medicine, Klimt created a nude figure who seems to exalt in the public display of her sexuality. The faculty fiercely condemned his work and "demanded that if the figure in question had to be female, then it should be clothed, or if it was unavoidable that it be naked, then it should be a male figure instead." After years of protracted argument, Klimt finally renounced the commission. His *Hostile Powers*, part of a Beethoven exhibition in 1902, featured a pot-bellied hermaphrodite based on Aubrey Beardsley's *Ali Baba* (1897). One clinically minded critic exclaimed:

> Klimt has once again produced a work of art that calls for a doctor and two keepers. His frescoes would fit well in a psychiatric institute. The representation of "Lewdness" on the back wall is the last word in obscenity.

Klimt had seen the Byzantine mosaics in Venice and Ravenna and adopted their two-dimensional pattern of abstract ornamental forms. In *Goldfish (To My Critics)*, a woman seductively displays her swirling tresses and comely bottom against a flat metallic background of watery flowers and flowery waters. In *Water Serpents*, swooning subaqueous anorexics float in a trancelike state. His legacy to Viennese Expressionism was the emaciated woman with "protruding pelvis and rib cage, provocatively red hair and lips, long and slender legs."

In his portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer, the subject is imprisoned in the stiff Byzantine richness and sensuous serpentine swirls of a vibrant cloth of gold. In *Expectations*, an almond-eyed, high-foreheaded, lacquered-haired, heavily bangled beauty, with contorted Balinese hand gestures, hides, like a camouflaged animal, between a stiff brocaded gown and a vertiginous tapestry. As Baudelaire wrote of these dazzling *femmes fatales* in "*Sed Non Satiata*," in *Les Fleurs du mal*:

> Her polished eyes are wrought of hypnotic minerals,
> And in that strange symbolic nature,
> In which unviolated angel and sphinx of old unite,
> Made all of gold and steel and light and diamonds.
> Forever glittering, like a useless star,
> Lies the frigid majesty of the sterile woman.

Death and Life, like so many of Klimt's works, contains the threat of morbidity and shows the skull beneath the skin. As Klimt wrote of *Hope I*: "Everything is ugly: she is, and what she sees—only within her is there beauty growing, hope. And her eyes say that." In his portrait of the nine-year-old Mäda Primavesi, the precocious child stands, in a white dress, against a lavender background. With legs apart, hand on hip, and a defiant gaze, she confronts the viewer with an unsettling mixture of engaging innocence and sexual sophistication.

Judith II portrays a stunningly beautiful, bare-breasted woman—head jutting forward with operatic intensity and bejeweled hands clutching at the rich brocade above the severed head of her victim. But Klimt's masterpiece, and most famous painting, is undoubtedly *The Kiss* (1908). The lovers' bare faces and hands protrude, as in a Byzantine icon, from a flat decorative envelope. The woman kneels, as in prayer, on a rich bed of flowers as strings of gold leaves trail from her golden cape. Like Hedda Gabler, she wears "vine leaves in her hair." The man gently turns her head sideways and kisses her cheek. The subtle arrangement of their four hands and the sensual outline of her body suggest an erotic swoon.

Scholars have suggested Egyptian, Byzantine, Turkish, Persian, Japanese, and Korean—as well as contemporary—influences on Klimt. But no one has mentioned the all-pervasive influence of Gustave Moreau. J.-K. Huysmans' precious description in *Against the Grain* (1884) of Moreau's *Salomé*—whom Klimt also painted—applies with equal force to the opulence of Klimt's art:

> across her triumphal robe, sewn with pearls, patterned with silver, spangled with gold, the jeweled cuirass, of which every chain is a precious stone, seems to be ablaze with little snakes of fire, swarming over the matte flesh, over the tea-rose skin, like gorgeous insects with dazzling shards, mottled with carmine, spotted with pale yellow, speckled with steel blue, striped with peacock green.

Jeffrey Meyers, a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, has written about art in Painting and the Novel *and* The Enemy: A Biography of Wyndham Lewis.

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by Scott P. Richert

Cui Bono?

You cannot hope to bribe or twist / (thank God!) the British journalist. But, seeing what the man will do / unbribed, there's no occasion to.

—Humbert Wolfe

The June issue of *Chronicles* was literally on the press on May 7, when local radio talk-show host Chris Bowman announced that Bishop Thomas Doran of the diocese of Rockford, Illinois, whose February statement on the sex-abuse scandals in the Catholic Church I had praised in my June column, was about to hold a press conference. Considering the media coverage over the past six months, what the bishop revealed was not surprising. "I am here," Bishop Doran said,

> to respond to allegations that a priest in the diocese, Father Harlan Clapsaddle, was involved in acts of sexual misconduct with minors. I can confirm that such charges were made regarding incidents that occurred about 25 years ago.
>
> I can also confirm that these charges were brought to the attention of the Diocesan Intervention Committee more than five years ago, in December 1996, and that the . . . Diocesan Intervention Committee investigated the charges, determined that they were credible and recommended immediate removal of the priest from his pastoral assignment. I approved that recommendation and he was removed on Jan. 8, 1997.

Bishop Doran then explained why the diocese chose to reveal these allegations at this time:

> We do not normally discuss any personnel issues. However, in recent days reporters from two local news media approached the diocese with questions about specific allegations which they said came from Kevin Misslich, one of the victims, and his mother, Arlene Misslich. As long as the family wants to make the misconduct known, I see no reason not to acknowledge it.

Bishop Doran went on to note that "This is not a case of a priest doing wrong, then being assigned to another pastoral post, and now finally being removed from that post."

> In fact, Father Clapsaddle was removed promptly more than five years ago—as soon as we had probable cause to believe the charges were true—and he has never again been given a pastoral post that would give him access to children. . . .
>
> In accord with our policy, Father Clapsaddle was removed immediately from his pastoral post. He then underwent evaluation and treatment for several months. In accord with diocesan policy, when he returned to the diocese, his faculties as a priest were severely restricted to assure that children would be protected, and he was not given a new pastoral assignment. Since his return to the diocese he has lived in that restricted situation and provided sacramental services to the elderly at Provena Cor Mariae [a diocesan retirement home] in a supervised setting.
>
> For a time, he also performed administrative duties under the supervision of Catholic Charities. In that capacity, his activities were limited to the floor of the Seton Center that houses that agency's administrative offices. When on rare occasions his duties took him from the building, he never carried out his functions except in the company of a supervisor.

Because the "statute of limitations for both civil and criminal proceeding had long expired when the case was presented to the diocese more than five years ago," the diocese, Bishop Doran claimed, respected the desire of the Misslich family for confidentiality "until this time, when it is clear from their recent contacts with reporters that they wish to make this case public." Finally, Bishop Doran noted, "I am convinced that the diocese acted responsibly in accord with our own policy."

Bishop Doran's contention was echoed by Philip Jenkins, a professor of religious studies at Pennsylvania State University and the author of *Pedophiles and Priests: Anatomy of a Contemporary Crisis* (as well as a contributing editor to *Chronicles*), who, at my request, examined the media coverage of the case and Bishop Doran's statement and concluded that

> the diocese did exactly what was appropriate in the circumstances, treating the victims' complaints seriously, and responding with the needs of potential victims at the forefront of their concerns. . . . Reading the accounts of the case, I fail to see what more the diocese could have been expected to do.

One of the two local news organizations alluded to by Bishop Doran was the *Rockford Register Star*, a Gannett-owned newspaper that had interviewed the bishop the Thursday before his press conference. On the morning of May 8, the *Register Star* ran a 3,500-word story on the allegations. Starting with the headline, however, the newspaper abandoned any pretense at objectivity. Despite the fact that their own story revealed that the allegations of sexual abuse were confined to an approximately 20-month period between spring 1978 and November or December 1979, the editors chose the headline, "Tale of priest's abuse spans two decades." The first three paragraphs of the article, which was written by Geri Nikolai and Edith C. Webster, set the tone:

> For the past six months, American

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> Catholics have reeled from almost daily news reports about child abuse by Catholic priests and coverups by bishops. Here in the Rock River Valley, the reaction was a sigh and the sentiment: "Thank God it didn't happen here."
>
> It did.
>
> On April 8, exactly one month ago today, Kevin Misslich called the Rockford Register Star. "I was abused by a priest in Rockford," he said. "And I want people to know."

The *Register Star* congratulated itself, claiming that the diocese was "forced to tell its side of story because the Misslich-es talked to the Register Star," and implied that Bishop Doran, by not revealing the allegations in 1996, effectively covered up Father Clapsaddle's alleged misconduct.

While Misslich (now 38), whom the *Register Star* described as "an opera singer and voice teacher living in Hoboken, N.J.," claimed that Father Clapsaddle "assaulted" him "dozens of times," the *Register Star* admitted that he was "reluctant to lay out details." Of the two incidents that he did describe, one was nonsexual.

When the Misslich family finally reported the alleged abuse of Kevin and his two brothers to the diocese in 1996, at the tail end of the last round of sexual-abuse scandals, they rejected diocesan offers to pay for monitored therapy and demanded between $110,000 and $178,500 for each brother before settling for $27,500 each, according to the *Register Star*. Misslich did not explain to the *Register Star* why he had waited 17 years to report the alleged abuse, and in three separate conversations with me in May and June, and one (which Misslich initiated) with Thomas Fleming, he refused to answer any questions on the record or to detail any incidents of abuse beyond the two he had described for the *Register Star*.

While questioning Bishop Doran's contention that the allegations of abuse were kept quiet at the request of the Missliches, Nikolai and Webster accepted Kevin Misslich's claim that the diocese "protected Clapsaddle from public scrutiny," even though the Missliches themselves stayed silent for almost six more years. Furthermore, they avoided raising uncomfortable questions about Kevin Misslich's story, including his admission that his parents repeatedly allowed Father Clapsaddle to take the three boys, separately and together, on unsupervised trips to Wisconsin, New York City, Niagara Falls, and Washington, D.C. In fact, Kevin Misslich told the *Register Star* that he revealed the abuse to his parents in November or December 1979, on the day that Father Clapsaddle arrived to take Kevin's youngest brother, Chad (then a third grader), to Disney World. Rather than rescue his son from a possible predator, Kevin's father (according to the *Register Star*) "made a number of calls to Clapsaddle in Florida" over the course of the next "four or five days." When Father Clapsaddle and Chad returned, "Richard Misslich had a conversation with the priest in the yard of the family home," and, the *Register Star* reported, "the three brothers, to this day, have not seen [the priest] again." (Nikolai and Webster did not indicate whether either of the Misslich parents ever saw Father Clapsaddle after December 1979.)

Five-and-a-half years later, in 1985, Richard Misslich, who, Nikolai and Webster wrote, "was known as a strong family man, a friend who took good care of his home and yard and an active churchgoer," was murdered by two men, Victor Ganus and Jamie Rixie. "Testimony at the trial," the reporters wrote, "indicated that Richard Misslich had been lured to Rixie's apartment from a adult bookstore and was killed while he resisted an attempt to rob him." Nikolai and Webster, however, left out many significant details about the circumstances of Misslich's murder—details that were fully documented by the *Register Star* 16 years earlier, in the newspaper's coverage of the trial of Rixie and Ganus.

On June 27, 1986, the day that the murder trial began, the *Rockford Register Star* noted that

> A jury of six women and six men will begin hearing testimony today in the murder trial of Jamie Rixie, 21, one of two men accused of robbing and killing a 49-year-old man during what authorities say was a homosexual encounter May 1, 1985.

During the first day's testimony, reported the *Register Star* on June 28, 1986,

> Forensic pathologist Dr. William Rouse testified that Misslich bled to death from numerous cuts and stab wounds about the upper body and head and that the body also had binding marks on the wrists and cord marks about the throat.
>
> He also described bite marks which he said were "usually associated with an expression of some type of sexual activity," and said Misslich's blood alcohol level was 0.13. Illinois law recognizes 0.1 as intoxication.

When the trial resumed the next Monday, the *Register Star* reported on July 1, 1986, "Misslich's wife, Arlene, testified briefly . . . She identified a jacket she said her husband was wearing when he left their Dawson Avenue home at about 9:15 p.m. April 30 [1985]." She did not, however, challenge the prosecution's contention that her husband was killed during a homosexual encounter. Nor did Kevin Misslich (then 23), who was quoted in more than one *Register Star* article as a spokesman for his family. The *Register Star* continued:

> James Capicotte, a bartender at Mr. C's tavern, 528 7th St., described Misslich as a regular customer who came to the bar once a week "like clockwork." He said Misslich left the bar at midnight April 30 after about two hours of "talking and mingling" with other customers. He said Misslich did not appear to be intoxicated.

Several witnesses on July 7 corroborated Capicotte's testimony, according to the *Register Star*'s report on July 8, 1986:

> Police detective Dan Foltz said bartender James Capicotte . . . told him Misslich danced with another man in Mr. C's Cocktail Corner bar the night he was killed and said the bartender told him Misslich went to a 7th Street adult bookstore "to occasionally make contacts." Capicotte denied making the remarks during testimony last week.
>
> Todd Maybe, 22, who said Misslich was his supervisor at Cam-Car Textron, said he saw Misslich in Mr. C's, which he described as "a gay bar." He said he knew Misslich was married and had children, but, when asked by [Rixie defense attorney Daniel] Cain if he knows Misslich's "sexual preference," Maybe replied: "Male."
>
> Sheldon Michael Walling, 20, former clerk in the adult bookstore,

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said Misslich came into the store between 1 and 2 a.m. and that he gave him change for a $20 bill, including $5 in quarters.

He said Misslich, who had been coming into the store "once a week, once every two weeks" for several months, went into a section of the store with coin-operated movie machines.

Walling identified a photograph of [Rixie co-defendant Victor] Ganus and said he came into the store a few minutes after Misslich and that he observed them "talking and laughing" beside a rack of "bondage" magazines.

Walling described Ganus as "very butch and tough-acting." He said Misslich and Ganus "left together," and that "Richard just looked at me and raised his eyebrows."

Walling at first refused to answer when asked if there was any conversation at that point.

"I plead the Fifth," he said.

Told by [Circuit Judge David] Englund that he should answer the question, Walling said, "I looked back at him (Misslich) and said, 'You ain't got much.'"

Finally, on July 9, 1986, the day after Jamie Rixie took the stand in his own defense, the *Register Star* reported that,

> Earlier in the day Tuesday, a young man who said he was playing pinball in the back of a 7th Street adult bookstore the night Misslich was killed told the jury he saw Misslich leave the store with Ganus. He said he went outside a few seconds later and saw Misslich go to his car as Ganus crossed the street to an older car. Misslich had begun to pull away from the curb when Ganus came across the street and got into the passenger side of Misslich's car.
>
> The young man said Misslich and Ganus had shared a coin-operated movie booth inside the store and that he overhead [*sic*] part of their conversation. "I thought I heard cocaine mentioned," he said.

During his testimony,

> Rixie denied that he suggested "robbing a faggot" as prosecution witnesses testified earlier. He said that the subject came up when Ganus boasted that when he needed money he would "go to a gay bar and roll a fag."

The testimony at the murder trial, as reported by the *Rockford Register Star* itself 16 years ago, suggests that there was much more to Richard Misslich than Nikolai's and Webster's description of "a strong family man, a friend who took good care of his home and yard and an active churchgoer." In fact, the testimony raises serious questions about whether Kevin Misslich was completely forthcoming when interviewed by the *Register Star*. Did Misslich inform Nikolai and Webster of the circumstances of his father's death? If so, their decision (or their editors' decision) to leave it out of their story indicates a willful bias on their part, because the circumstances of Richard Misslich's death open up any number of alternative explanations of the family's relationship with Father Clapsaddle. If, on the other hand, Misslich did not inform Nikolai and Webster of the circumstances of his father's death, wouldn't this omission call his truthfulness into question? (On the other hand, as one Rockford journalist I interviewed pointed out, the *Register Star* should have had questions about Kevin Misslich's truthfulness from the first moment he contacted the newspaper, because, in doing so, he had violated his confidentiality agreement—a legal document—with the diocese. Did Nikolai and Webster ask Misslich whether, having broken a legal contract, he intended to return the $27,500 he had received from the diocese?)

Did Nikolai and Webster question Misslich about the accounts of his father's murder that were printed in their own newspaper? They had clearly looked back at those stories, because their description of the trial echoes the account the *Register Star* printed on October 17, 1986, the day after Victor Ganus was sentenced. (Both stories, for instance, claim that Misslich was "lured" from the adult bookstore.) If they did question him, why did they (or their editors) choose not to report the entire story?

One possible answer might be that they had the same experience I had when I tried to interview Kevin Misslich. When I asked him about the trial of his father's murderers, Misslich became very angry and refused to answer questions on the record. Did Nikolai and Webster agree to leave the details of his father's murder out of the story in exchange for Kevin Misslich's continuing cooperation? If so, why?

More broadly, did Nikolai and Webster question Kevin Misslich's purpose in coming forward at this time? What does he hope to accomplish by doing so? He has stated that he wants to make sure that others in the Rockford diocese do not suffer his alleged fate, but his silence for the past six years—not to mention the 17 before that—might indicate other motives. Did Nikolai and Webster ask him whether he is dissatisfied with the amount of the settlement he received from the diocese? The *Register Star* reported that Misslich became angry after seeing "news stories . . . praising the Rockford diocesan policy on sexual abuse as a model for the nation," yet Nikolai and Webster give no indication that they asked Misslich whether he has any particular political agenda or even whether he is still a practicing Catholic.

After reading all of the *Register Star*'s coverage of Kevin Misslich's allegations against Father Clapsaddle and Bishop Doran, examining the transcripts of the Jamie Rixie and Victor Ganus murder trials, and reading all of the *Register Star*'s stories from 1985 and 1986 concerning those trials, the only thing I can say with any certainty is that something seems to have happened between at least one member of the Misslich family and Father Clapsaddle. If I were writing a fictionalized account of the events, I might very well choose to adopt Kevin Misslich's version of the story, because it is the one most likely to sell in today's climate. But I'm not writing a novel, and neither were Nikolai and Webster. By choosing to leave out the details of Richard Misslich's death, they abandoned their journalistic objectivity and became participants in the story, denying the *Register Star*'s readers the opportunity to examine the facts for themselves and to make up their own minds. At best, "This illustrates the remarkably selective nature of press coverage when looking at these cases. Anything which doesn't fit the simplistic image of the predatory priest is automatically filtered out," as Philip Jenkins told me, after reviewing the *Register Star*'s coverage in 1986 and 2002. At worst, it indicates a willingness on the part of Nikolai, Webster, and the editors of the *Rockford Register Star* to subjugate the pursuit of truth to an anti-Catholic political agenda. ◁C

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Letter From London

by Derek Turner

A London Political Bestiary

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From the West End, to the Square Mile, out into the most featureless South London suburbs, London is full of political resonances and the memories of old controversies. From all kinds of streets, roads, avenues, broadways, high streets, rises, hills, crescents, parks, mews, and terraces, native or adoptive Londoners have gone out into the world to make their country feared or famous.

The streets of Belgravia, Fitzrovia, Mayfair, Bayswater, Chelsea, South Kensington, and Notting Hill are littered with houses once inhabited by statesmen, generals, and thinkers who have changed this country and the world, from Thomas Carlyle's House in Cheyne Walk to the blue plaque marking Karl Marx's cramped and complicated residency in Soho. (The building is now an Italian restaurant!)

Nonconformist, mercantile, and relatively cosmopolitan London has often been at odds with the relatively tradition-minded agricultural hinterland. During the Civil War, London was solidly pro-Parliament, to the extent that the Royalists never seriously considered attacking it. (Their one halfhearted attempt, in 1642 at Turnham Green near Chiswick, was defeated very easily by some badly trained bands of London apprentices.) London is still at odds with the countryside—one sign of this appeared during the fox-hunting debate, when opinion polls invariably showed a very large majority of Londoners opposed to hunting. This may be partly out of pity for the mangy and skinny urban foxes that eke out a diseased and precarious living rooting in London's dustbins.

Londoners have occasionally fought one another with considerable enthusiasm: for religious reasons, as during the Gordon Riots dramatized in *Barnaby Rudge*; for political reasons, as happened over John Wilkes' battles to represent the restive electors of Middlesex; or for ethnic reasons, as at the so-called Battle of Cable Street in 1936, when East End Jews, seeking to halt Mosley's Blackshirts, fought the police with knuckledusters, razors, and paving slabs.

Most areas in London have a distinctive cultural and political aura of their own, although many of them share a certain degree of Whiggishness, brought about by Londoners' distance from the natural world. The connotations of "Hampstead," for instance, are familiar to all who take an interest in British politics. One of London's most beautiful and exclusive suburbs, Hampstead has become almost synonymous with "champagne socialism." The suburb has long been popularly thought to contain very wealthy people who, because of their angst about being wealthier than most other people, indulge in theoretical Marxism. Michael Wharton, the *Daily Telegraph* columnist who writes under the name "Peter Simple," uses a stereotypical Hampstead character named Mrs. Dutt-Pauker (who lives in a house called "Marxmount") in his column to make points about "liberal" values and the nastiness or stupidity of those who advocate harmful social policies for everybody else, while shielding themselves from any ill effects.

Before Hampstead came to symbolize what it does now, there was Clapham, where the powerful Clapham Sect, led by William Wilberforce, advocated utopian and often radical political goals (including, to their eternal credit, the abolition of the slave trade) that were often at odds with the aspirations of the proverbial "man on the Clapham Omnibus," an archetypal figure sometimes invoked, by those fond of clichés, to represent popular opinion.

Before the Clapham Sect was dreamt of, Low Church, Whiggish opinions were typical of the Square Mile and its northern outlying suburbs of Hoxton, Hackney, Shoreditch, Stoke Newington, and Stamford Hill. Stolid City burgesses and aldermen had little time for quasi-mystical "organic bonds," the divine right of kings, or patriotism—they were too interested in trade. (They might be described as the neoconservatives of their day.) They often disapproved of sex, gambling, acting, drinking, literature, and music as well. The City (London's financial district) was often instrumental in changing policy by simply refusing to lend money for imperial adventures and by backing schemes to boost the prestige of business.

The new epicenter of what we now call "liberalism" is Islington, nicknamed "The Socialist Republic of Islington" in the 1970's because of its egalitarian insanities and now the home of the Blairs and many of their closest allies. Islington is a strange combination of government-owned housing (65 percent of residents are council tenants) jam-packed with recent immigrants, the dysfunctional, and those decent people who haven't quite made it to civilization, as well as some of the most desirable houses in London, which can change hands for millions of pounds.

Islington is now famous as the home of New Labour politics—vapid soundbites delivered by pager to a bloodless, sexless, raceless, classless elite that lives on mineral water and vegetarian quiche and holidays in Tuscany. Only 85 percent of Labour Party members own their own homes, but 100 percent take holidays in Chianti-shire! Hugo Gurdon's comment in the *Daily Telegraph* that "Mr. Blair is a man of hidden shallows" could—and should—be extended to cover almost all of the Islingtonian Labour Party.

All of London's evocative proper names are full of political subtexts, nuances, and dread significance (to the conservative-minded). There are three shorthand terms for inept, politically correct, and moderately corrupt local government, where Labour has been running a virtual one-party state for decades by uniting those who feel class resentments with those who hate Western civilization and white people, those who believe that men and women are the same, and those who delight in sexual deviancy. These three unhappy places are Lambeth, Hackney, and Southwark. The trio has junior siblings in Greenwich, Lewisham, Tower Hamlets, and Newham.

I remember looking at the unlovely Joan Ruddock, Labour MP for my inner-city constituency of Lewisham Deptford, on the night of the cataclysmic 1997 election. Surrounded by the usual inner-city Labour mafia—rough-looking Scots and Irish, shaven-headed men wearing AIDS ribbons, dizzy middle-

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class women, students, and splenetic industrial goblins—and flushed with an even easier-than-usual victory, the erstwhile minister for women spoke gloatingly of how she wanted to thank "all the ethnic minority workers who were such a great help in making Lewisham a Tory-free zone." Her photo opportunities in the local press with black graffiti "artists" had obviously paid off!

What ideological horrors—what tedious ectoplasms—are evoked by the simple word Bloomsbury! What very different emotions are conjured up by Smithfield—the scene of shameful martyrdoms, Dissolution bonfires, and the first printing presses in England! How can one avoid thinking unpleasant things when contemplating modern Notting Hill—scene of the triumphalist annual Carnival and, viler still, of William Hague's backward-baseball-cap-wearing, breakdancing, mango-juice-drinking extravaganza? If only Adam Wayne, G.K. Chesterton's *Napoleon of Notting Hill*, could come and clean up his city on the hill!

Unprintable thoughts are evoked by Peckham, now probably the least British place in South London, but which was once a byword for respectability (which is why the Grossmiths introduced the infuriating Mr. Franching of Peckham into the London classic, *Diary of a Nobody*) and which was even renowned for the education on offer in its academies, which is why a young Irishman called Oliver Goldsmith went there to teach.

Then there are Spitalfields and Whitechapel, once the home of Huguenot silk weavers and Henry VIII's artillery corps (as well as the haunt of Jack the Ripper), which is now 95-percent Bengali. (Whitechapel should now be called Brown-mosque.) While I lived just off Brick Lane, on a street named after a medieval merchant-adventurer, a local election was held. Neither side bothered to print its campaign literature in English.

It is unceasingly strange to take the five-minute walk between Bishopsgate, where beautiful modern buildings and clean people predominate, to Brick Lane, where dirty shops noisy with Asian music and enlivened with Indian film posters sell things that I would have thought couldn't be given away. When I am feeling gloomy, I sometimes think that the destiny of London lies in the East End rather than the West. This impression was heightened by my chance discovery in Fitzrovia of a Camden Council plaque marking the sacred spot where the first members of London's Nepalese community foregathered.

But—apart from mere details like the best classical music and theater in the world; Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's, and Wren's other churches; and the National Gallery, the delightful parks, and the world's best choice of beer—London is the birthplace of the *Spectator*, the Carlton Club, and the Antigallican League. It is the city where such people as Johnson, Goldsmith, Reynolds, Hogarth, Burke, and Smollett lived and worked, and the home of sardonic wit—such as the simple line about the notoriously scruffy Charles Fox that appeared in a contemporary Tory newspaper: "Mr. Fox appeared at St. Stephens in a clean waistcoat."

I have only to travel along the river by boat to Greenwich, as politicians have done for generations, to dine at the Trafalgar Tavern on its stilts above the Thames, or go to the Temple, the center of London's legal world founded by the Knights Templar, with its lawns that sweep down to where the river used to run before Bazalgette embanked it. This is a place where tradition still holds sway, where Goldsmith and Johnson lived, where the first-ever performance of *Twelfth Night* took place in the still-standing Middle Temple Hall, where chain-mailed Norman knights sleep in a round church based on the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. This is a great city. The great silver tower of Canary Wharf on the Isle of Dogs is a reminder—if, unfortunately, a rare one—of how grandness of vision and excellence of execution can survive in a mediocre age.

The London Assembly and mayor have had the effect of increasing the costs of local government and making it even more impersonal. The Assembly will certainly not strengthen the local identities that make London so endlessly interesting—on the contrary, it will tend to draw power toward the center and curtail the rights and ceremonies of the medieval Corporation of London, London's best-run local authority by far. What is worst about the London Assembly is that it is likely to be dominated by the left, as was its predecessor, the ill-famed Greater London Council also led by Ken Livingstone, the nasal-toned, polyester-clad enthusiast who is also now mayor. Massive postwar immigration, family breakdown, and all the other problems with which we are all too familiar have given the left a massive advantage in all of our inner cities.

Although much of what goes on in Parliament is not of specific relevance to London, and what the present Commons does do for London—such as call the Metropolitan Police "racists" because they failed to solve a murder case—tends to be bad, London culture and conversation set the tone for the country's political life (unfortunately!). It is, therefore, worth mentioning some of the heroes who have made Westminster the envy of the civilized world and who have, at some time, lived and breathed the supercharged air of SW1.

No, I don't mean Burke, Pitt, Peel, Wellington, Disraeli, or Powell; I mean such truly world-historical figures as Sir Boyle Roche (1743-1807), a famous propagator of "Irish bulls," or spoonerisms. Sir Boyle is justly famous for his quizzical bull on posterity ("Why should we beggar ourselves to benefit posterity? What has posterity ever done for us?") and his exasperated "I wish, Mr Speaker, that this motion were at the bottom of the bottomless pit," but his conservatism was profound, and he had a due reverence for the role of the King and Burke's compact between the quick and the dead.

"I stand prostrate at the feet of royalty," he once explained movingly, and then warned of the perils of Johnny Frenchman:

> If these Gallic villains should invade us, sir, 'tis on that very table maybe that honourable members might see their own destinies lying in heaps atop of one other. Here, perhaps, these murderous martial men would break in, cut us into joints, and throw our bleeding heads on the table to stare us in the face.

Mournfully, he reflected that "The cup of our trouble is running over but, alas, it is not yet full," while, waxing mystical, he stared into the British crystal ball: "All along the untrodden paths of the future, I can see the footprints of an unseen hand."

Sir Boyle was a generally loved figure in the House of Commons, mainly because of his earnestness but also because of the absence of the sort of nasty post-Marxists who now are doing so much damage to the whole Western world, with their "humanitarian wars" and their hatred of all traditions and local diversity.

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It could be said of the kindly treatment always received by Sir Boyle what an Ulster MP once said of Northern Ireland: "We have to go back centuries for a parallel to such treatment and even then we don't find it."

Sir Boyle's resolute refusal to be "on message" should be emulated by the present crop of Labour MPs, who rather disgustingly try to outdo themselves in sycophancy to Tony Blair. This has caused Blair to start treating Parliament in a rather cavalier fashion (excuse the pun!) by usually neglecting to turn up for Prime Minister's Questions and by declaring war on a sovereign state without bothering to take Parliament into his confidence.

Other, too-little known Westminster heroes include the imperialist who noted memorably the taxonomically unclassifiable quality of the British lion when he boasted: "One thing of which you may be certain—whether the British lion is roaming the plains of Canada or climbing the mountains of India, it will not draw in its horns or slink into its shell!"

Sir Wilfrid Lawson, the temperance campaigner, showed that even teetotalers can make jokes when he observed of one of his strongest opponents, a man well known for his hail-fellow-well-met qualities: "The Hon Member is about to make a speech on the subject of drink, for I see him sitting there evidently full of his subject."

Even if Sir Wilfrid must have generally been rather tiresome company (this excellent joke notwithstanding), we could all do with more people like him nowadays, and we definitely need many more Sir Boyles, more individualists speaking and voting in Westminster and living in London. This is just one more reason why Labour's class war against the House of Lords is so much to be regretted by all those who love England, as it is tending to push out the eccentrics from that house and usher in the social workers and polytechnic lecturers. London's dining rooms will be duller—and Britain's governance, worse—for their Lordship's absence.

There is still a deep well of resilience in London, a kind of good-humored pride which is summarized in "the Blitz spirit," a little phrase all real Londoners understand instinctively. This spirit may well be the saving of London. But it needs to be focused and directed toward specific ends, and the performance of the present-day Conservative Party does not exactly inspire confidence in our future. One must hope that the inexperienced 19th-century Conservative MP was right when he said: "We on this side of the house are not such fools as we look."

Derek Turner is the editor of Right Now!, *published in London.*

Letter From Venice

by Andrei Navrozov

American Italics, or Revelation According to P.T. Barnum

◆

As in some picaresque dream, the carousel that has been spinning out a tale of broken hearts and mistaken identities begins to slow down, the roulette wheel grows disenchanted with the last bourgeois revolution, and all of a sudden even the drum of the concrete mixer that is shadowing the Venetian's limousine all the way to the airport grinds to a gravelly stop. *Lady and gentlemens,* as my friend Gusov might say when in a pompous mood, *I have been to Las Vegas, I have seen the beginning of the end, and I now know what the salt that has lost its savor tastes like.* But meanwhile, like the dove with the olive leaf in its beak, I am returning to the ark of the narrative, and now the stillness and the smell of the sea are once more all about me, and already the water taxi is going full throttle under a waning moon that looks like a *piano nobile* badly divided among the brothers after a century and a half of family quarrels.

The place where we chose to stay could have been Augustan Rome *constructed in a majestic Greco-Roman style,* that is to say, Caesars Palace, or Italy as Mazzini invented it and hence of no particular period, the Bellagio. *More than a thousand fountains, enhanced by music and lights. State-of-the-art fog and audio systems. The Bellagio Gallery of Fine Art. Synchronized swimmers, divers, contortionists, trapeze artists, and others perform incredible feats. This facility is a non-commercial venue dedicated to the presentation of high-quality art exhibitions.* Or it could have been Paris—Paris, France—because there is one in Vegas, you know, complete with *the Eiffel Tower tour and Restaurant. Rustic finishes have been applied to ensure that each structure is unique and appears appropriately weathered for its age. The ambience is very European and charming, and the shops are provincial and unique.* Or I could have gone to the Excalibur. *Ever dream of traveling back in time to an age of jousting knights? This is your opportunity to enter the world of King Arthur.* Or else we could have stayed at the Tropicana, *a bit of Polynesia in the desert, with its colorful prints and wood-and-bamboo furnishings.*

But for reasons no longer obvious even to my longtime gambling companion, I had decided on the *upscale Venetian, along nearly a quarter-mile of Venice's famed Grand Canal, where for a small fee you can take a gondola ride and be serenaded in an authentic gondola by a singing gondolier wearing authentic gear.* We breakfasted at a restaurant called *Tintoretto*:

TINTORETTO
MENU
Starting at 4.00 pm
The Home Made *MAMMA*
Dinner $21.95

—Breakfast Any Time—
Served with Italian Toast and Potatoes with Bell Peppers and Onions
Veggie, Cheese, or Ham Omelette
$6.95 each

Bagel with Cream Cheese
and Lox $9.95

15% Gratuity will be added
on parties of six or more.

I suppose I ought to say something about the gambling. Not contented with having added an extra number to the wheel, thus boosting the house's advantage over the player from 2.7 percent to 5.26 percent in what they call "American" roulette, these P.T. Barnums have even redesigned the single-zero "French" roulette wheel—known throughout Europe, incidentally, as "American"—to make the wells more shallow, the frets flatter, and the center cone lower. Hence what, in the better London clubs, is still a suicidally dangerous game of observation, extrapolation, and inference, is here reduced to a mechanized variant of lotto, ideal for old ladies who wish to lose their life savings slowly, one dollar at a time. In London, betting a thousand pounds per spin is barely respectable, while here, after Gusov and I had kept $1,000 on the

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layout for an hour, a crowd something like a hundred strong gathered to gape and bleat.

The place I visited is not the old utopia of gangsters' craps-shooting molls, of wedding chapels and cash loans, of tail fins and bail bondsmen. It is the new America, a place where actuary tables and shopping malls are churches, museums, and concert halls, a state of mind where the lowest common denominator of the chemically tranquilized millipede defines all beauty, all culture, and all history. *There are 127,000 hotel rooms, more than New York or Paris. The finest collection of owner-operated restaurants in the world. Premier gaming in a Venetian palazzo.* It has nothing to do with gambling—that is to say, with risk—and everything to do with the pursuit of idleness, which is the true revolutionary ideal of mankind. More than once during my sojourn, I was reminded of the scene in Lampedusa's *The Leopard* when the Prince is approaching Palermo besieged by Garibaldist rabble, passing the shuttered convents and the domes of the darkened monasteries:

> And at that hour, at night, they were despots of the scene. It was against them really that the bonfires were lit on the hills, stoked by men who were themselves very like those living in the monasteries below, as fanatical, as self-absorbed, as avid for power or rather for the idleness which was, for them, the purpose of power.

The idleness to the pursuit of which the city—and the rich and powerful state, richer than Babylon in the Revelation and armed with nuclear missiles, that emulates, inspires, and sustains it—is dedicated is officially called *entertainment*. Here, even two-bit hookers may only advertise in the Yellow Pages as "entertainers," which, the taxidriver explained, is not really that confusing after all, since you are probably looking up "escorts" under "E" anyway. He had a *Taxi Rider's Bill of Rights* posted in his cab, I noted, which included "Air Conditioning on Demand." At the Venetian, *entertainment* was available on similar terms:

> Bringing high art and culture to Las Vegas, the Venetian is proud to be home to not one, but TWO prestigious Guggenheim museums. The 63,700 sq. ft. Guggenheim Las Vegas, designed by Pritzker-prize winning architect Rem Koolhaas, debuted in October 2001. Also open is the 7,660 sq. ft. Guggenheim Hermitage Museum which combines rare works of art from both the Guggenheim and the State Hermitage Museum from St. Petersburg, Russia. The initial exhibit features 45 masterpieces from the Impressionist and Early Modern eras, some never before seen in the United States. Visitors can also take in headlining acts at the state-of-the-art, four-level Venetian Showroom.

"If the CIA can merge with the KGB," Gusov murmured ruefully when I pointed to the press release, "I do not see why the Hermitage cannot merge with the Guggenheim."

Indeed, why not? And, while you're at it, why not *recreate with painstaking exactness*, against the picturesquely lunar backdrop of the atomic testing ground that is the Nevada Desert, *the famous landmarks that make Venice the most beloved, romantic city in the world?* Let us be serious, lady and gentlemens! Did not the wise men who built Yale University, for instance, so reason, aiming to *recreate with painstaking exactness* what they supposed was the ageless Gothic of Eurford and Eurbridge, and all the things that made them *the most beloved, romantic seats of higher learning on earth?* Did not the instigators of the American Revolution so reason, wishing to *recreate not one, but TWO great chapters of history, from the excitement and the high drama of Runnymede, with King John and the valiant band of barons that rise up against him in authentic period costume, to the great upheaval of the English Revolution and the prestigious ambience of Sir Oliver Cromwell?* And did not the CIA so reason, when it decided to merge with the KGB in all but name, *to recreate with painstaking exactness the democratic structures of a free country in totalitarian Russia, culminating in an award-winning, 63,700 sq. ft. political façade behind which any number of dirty deals could be done between us and them?*

Lady and gentlemens, I will go further than my gambling friend Gusov. This is not the beginning of the end. This is the end.

Andrei Navrozov is Chronicles' *European correspondent.*

Letter From France

by Michael McMahon

Out With the New

◆

On March 12, I was kneeling at the back of the vast 11th-century abbey church of Fontgombault, France, where I formed exactly one third of the congregation at a mid-week, mid-Lent, mid-morning Mass. At the other end of the nave, the monastic community had processed in with identifiably Benedictine decorum, taken their places in the choir stalls, chanted the morning office of Terce, and begun the introit of the Mass of the day—the Mass and the day being those set down in the missal minimally reformed in 1965, before the liturgical revolution that followed the Second Vatican Council. Fontgombault is anomalous, but not unique: It is one of a small number of religious communities that have managed to remain fully within the Roman discipline while staying loyal to the immemorial liturgical traditions so shamelessly abandoned by Rome. God is worshiped at Fontgombault in Latin. On high days and holidays, the church is packed.

So the Mass had not begun with a "good morning," the celebrant had not introduced himself by his Christian name, and the elderly woman who had arrived late and hovered behind me as I knelt at the very back of the building had not been exhorted to come on down to the front to "join in." There had been no warm-up wisecracks, no comments about the weather, no instruction as to when to stand or sit, and no announcement listing the various pages the congregation would have to fumble through in order to follow whichever liturgical options might be in store. No. The Mass had simply begun. The monks had silently taken breath and sung the Introit; and their singing was as natural and easy as breathing itself. And it was beautiful. The voices of 60 men were as one, the sound they made ebbing and flowing, rising and falling, lifting to touch the ancient stone vaulting of the roof and dropping to roll round the massive pillars along the nave: "*Exaudi, Deus, orationem meam, et ne despexeris deprecationem meam: intende in me, et exaudi me.*"

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("Hear, O God, my prayer, and despise not my supplication: Be attentive to me, and hear me.")

I followed them in my missal and in my heart. They sang a simple Kyrie, as suited the season; the Epistle was chanted from the Book of Exodus and told of Moses appealing to God to be merciful to His people, even though they had fallen into the ways of false worship. Then came the Gradual: "*Exsurge, Domine, fer opem nobis: et libera nos propter nomen tuum. Deus, auribus nostris audivimus: et patres nostri annuntiaverunt nobis opus, quod operatus est in diebus eorum, et in diebus antiquis.*" ("Arise, O Lord, bring help to us: and deliver us for Thy Name's sake. O God, we have heard with our ears: and our fathers have declared to us the work Thou hast wrought in their days, and in the days of old.") The Gospel told of Jesus preaching in the temple: "*Quid me quaeritis interficere?*" ("Why do you want to kill Me?")

At the washing of hands at the Offertory ("*Domine, dilexi decorum domus tuae: et locum habitationis gloriae tuae*"—"I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thy house and the place where Thy glory dwelleth"), I felt a gentle tap on my shoulder. It was the woman who had arrived a fraction late.

"*Excusez-moi, monsieur,*" she whispered. "*A quelle heure commence la Messe?*" I was a little surprised by her question.

"*Mais voilà la Messe,*" I said, gesturing toward the sanctuary. She sat down a few rows in front of me.

It was a moment of unexpected comedy. An anecdote flew distractingly into my head. In Evelyn Waugh's description of Emperor Haile Selassie's interminable coronation service, an American academic expert gives a running commentary for the benefit of the baffled European guests. For some hours, he interprets for them the ancient liturgical language and arcane ceremonial, identifying and commenting on the principal parts of the Mass. "Then," runs Waugh's punch line, "the mass began."

I attempted to return to my prayers, but the woman's question had left me unsettled. She was, I guessed, about 60 years old. She must have been 30 or so when the Church's ancient liturgical books were burned and replaced by those mundanely mistranslated bundles of options that pass for missals, each ring-bound alternative more gratingly prosaic than the last. Had it really come to this, that the timeless Latin rituals of Western Christendom could have become as foreign to a contemporary European as the ancient Ethiopian rites?

The answer is, evidently, "yes," and we are much poorer for it. The totality of this break with the past is disconcerting, and the dishonesty through which the faithful—and, for that matter, the unfaithful—have been robbed of their inheritance is astounding. We were told that the liturgy was to be in the vernacular so that we could better appreciate the truths that it expressed; we were then presented not with the old rite translated, but a new rite, which was then mistranslated, and mistranslated on purpose. (A schoolboy who offers "*credo*" for "we believe" is required to correct it; if he writes "for all men" for "*pro multis,*" his teacher puts a line through his answer. And no schoolboy at any time in history can have imagined he would get away with translating "*Et cum spiritu tuo*" as "And also with you.")

We were told that we were being given the new Mass because we had asked for it; but groups pressing for the vernacular before the Second Vatican Council had been small, and those petitioning for Latin afterward, much larger. We were told that this "renewal" of worship would fill seminaries and pews and reap converts, but the seminaries are closed, the pews have been replaced by stacking chairs that can be arranged informally by the fewer and fewer people who come to sit on them, and though we now do indeed live in a great age of conversion, it is of conversion to Islam, not to Rome.

We were told that the old, stuffy clericalism was to go and that there would once more be recognition of the "priesthood of the laity"; but for all the lay readers and eucharistic ministers we now have (and don't need), we have a new, worse kind of priestly bossiness. The nonpersonal authority of a celebrant acting ritually has gone. His impact now depends upon his personality. He feels he must impress the people he faces in order to lead them in their prayer to God. The result is usually a performance that would make a daytime talk-show audience cringe. Father Quizmaster jollies, badgers, hectors, upbraids, and hassles his congregation into the kind of "full and active participation" he requires. "That 'amen' wasn't loud enough! Come on, you can do better than that!" The sheep bleat their answer again. Father Paraphrase sees it as his life's mission to avoid ever saying exactly what is written on the service book in front of him. If his parishioners knew he would say "The Lord be with you" at any point, they might become too relaxed in their response—which they, however, are not allowed or able to embroider. So "The Lord be with all you good people!" it is—once—and "The Good Lord, Jesus Christ, our Saviour, be with each and every one of you!" the next time—but never the same variant twice.

Attending Mass at Fontgombault reminded me of just what it is that we have lost. The machinery of prayer has been smashed, and now, almost everywhere, each liturgical "celebration" is assembled from a rummage-box containing a few of its half-broken, dislocated parts, mixed up with the cultural cast-offs of the 1960's. Which brings me to Rembert Weakland, O.S.B., the recently disgraced archbishop of Milwaukee. It is a long way from the middle of France to Milwaukee, and an even greater distance separates Fongombault's 12th-century founder, Pierre de L'Etoile, from the precipitately retired American archbishop. L'Etoile founded a spiritual family that still flourishes and endowed it with a home that is timelessly beautiful. Weakland is the wrecking-bar renovator of Milwaukee Cathedral, which he has reordered to fit better with the contemporary liturgy he so admires.

What brings Weakland to mind is not his self-indulgent expenditure of five million dollars of church monies to rip out his cathedral's tabernacle, altar, altar rails, and baldachino in order to create a modernized interior overlooked by his own portrait. (Though, in a Church drowning in a sea in which long-sunken child-abuse cases keep bobbing to the surface, commissioning such architectural evisceration is like asking the band on the Titanic to stop playing "Nearer My God to Thee" so that the ship's fitters can move the bandstand into the middle of the ballroom and hang a painting of the ship's architect on the wall. The amount of money already spent on "reordering" church interiors all over the world has never been calculated, but if even a tenth of it had been spent on the starving or the homeless, Christ's saving presence would have been more widely asserted than by all that destructively ignorant tinkering.) Nor did I think of Weakland because of the revelation that he spent $450,000 of his diocese's funds to buy the silence of a man with whom he had had a sexual re-

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lationship. No: I mention Weakland because of an article he wrote (before his fall) in *Commonweal*, in which he acknowledged that "the Second Vatican Council's reforms have been implemented with mixed results," and attacked a group he identified as "restorationists"—those who want to restore what has been lost, rather than rework what is new and has been found wanting.

Unfortunately for his argument, the very publication of his article is evidence that the reforms he would improve upon are beyond hope. Every few months—sometimes more often—the English Catholic press is filled with letters to the editor from people parroting half-digested paragraphs from the documents of the Second Vatican Council. Some will quote lines that can only reasonably be construed as requiring the preservation of the ancient language, rites, and practices of the Church; others, equally convincingly, cite texts that call for the introduction of the vernacular and liturgical change. Such fruitless correspondences invariably include a censorious, self-important and heavy-handed put-down of those daring to express discontent at the *status quo* by the likes of Bishop Hugh Lindsay, whose observations in the March 16, 2001, issue of *The Tablet* are made with "my sharply observant bishop's eye." (Sharply observant? *My* eye! If his eye were even half as sharp as his tongue, that would really be something to brag about.) These tedious and iterative arguments 40 years after Vatican II simply wouldn't be happening if the reform had even halfway worked.

One of Weakland's principle points is that "restorationists" have effectively disqualified themselves from contributing to liturgical progress because they reject contemporary culture and art, which he believes capable of sustaining the transcendent. For good measure, he attributes to the "restorationist" movement a selective appreciation of the common artistic and cultural inheritance: He mocks them for forgetting that Mozart was influenced by the Enlightenment (though he fails to score the obvious Freemasonry point) and for having a "pick-and-choose" approach to the past. ("Seldom do they speak of Renaissance religious paintings or the saccharin devotional compositions of the French Romantics.")

In nearly 30 years of association with various aspects of what might be called the "Catholic traditionalist movement," I have never encountered anyone corresponding to this type. Had I done so, I would have not found much sympathy with them: They might be almost as boorish as Weakland himself. He appears to know as little about people as he knows about culture—contemporary or otherwise. I have, however, met many folks who have remained doggedly devoted to the Mass of their forefathers, for any number of combinations of reasons. I have met those who cling to a simple, penny-catechism understanding of their faith and find that contemporary liturgy fails adequately to express it. I have met others whose devotion to the old Mass is motivated by aesthetics. I have met intelligent and cultivated people who would laugh to scorn the naive and simplistic value judgments implicit in Archbishop Weakland's arguments, take issue with his lightweight reference to Renaissance painting, and point out that one of the most universally admired and uplifting requiem Masses was written by a French romantic, Gabriel Fauré, who was hardly an exemplary Catholic. I have known devotees of traditional liturgy who are tone deaf, who have written music for it, who follow football (the definitive European contemporary subculture) or who write devotional or secular poetry. I have met lovers of the old liturgy who I guess might be bad, and people I can more confidently say are like saints. I have met those for whom attendance at the old Latin low Mass first thing in the morning, muttered or mumbled in the half-light, is the highest of spiritual experiences. (I agree with them.) And I have met some thoroughly decent folk who are quite fond of the contemporary liturgy they have encountered, and even more, just as decent, who are indifferent.

My trip through France took me to many more churches, but any prayers that I said in them were private. In a wood miles from anywhere in the Limousin, I came across a tiny Norman chapel that resembled a barn. Sunlight leaked through the imperfect roof, and there were feathers and bird mess on the floor, but a vase of fresh flowers stood before the altar, which had been left in its original place. I had Limoges Cathedral almost to myself, and I lit a candle to the Virgin before wandering about to admire it. In the middle of the nave, I saw a young man of about 25, carefully reading a sign describing the building's history. He looked Middle Eastern; poorly dressed, he had his hands in his pockets, and wore a tight-fitting woolen hat on his head. I dismissed an uncharitable judgment that began to form in my mind, avoided his eye, and carried on my visit. Later, while I was admiring the stained glass in the apse, I sensed that somebody was standing beside me. It was the young man. I thought he was going to ask me for money—or even, perhaps, to demand it. But he didn't. He just wanted to share his exultation at the inexpressible beauty of the building. After we had spoken a little, he took me by the arm and led me to a handsome tomb from which the detail had been hacked by revolutionary zealots in the past. "How could anyone destroy something so beautiful?" he asked. And there were tears in his eyes as he spoke.

Michael McMahon is a freelance writer who lives in Norfolk, England.

Letter From the Countryside

by Mary Berry Smith

Educating for *Jeopardy*

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In 1986, I enrolled my oldest daughter in the same public school that my husband and I had attended. I knew from my experience in public education that there were problems, but I was hopeful that, with our participation in her schooling, she would be fine. During the next few years, I went from being an interested, excited parent and taxpayer to a disillusioned and, finally, angry parent and taxpayer.

Our daughter, Katie, went all the way through public school and is now a sophomore in a small, independent liberal-arts college, finally out of the system. Our second daughter, Virginia, is 16. She finished the second grade in public school and is now homeschooled. Tanya, who is 11, has never attended public school. The idea of, and faith in, public education is hard to give up, but we've come to the conclusion that there is no choice for us but to get out.

How long can a failed bureaucracy continue? It is clear to me that the educational system in Kentucky exists to serve itself and the marketplace. And, be-

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cause our educational system has become so heavily vocational, it now serves corporations by supplying them with workers. Our public-education system has become as dishonest as our land-grant universities, by serving the people they are mandated to serve last—or not at all. Because, I suppose, we need some kind of public education, I know that, in challenging the only existing system, I should be able to provide some answers that I can't provide. The questions must be asked, however, or this appalling situation won't change.

Besides my experience with my own children, I have tutored public-school students for 20 years in my home, kids who have been diagnosed with learning disabilities, some by doctors and some by the school system itself. (The fact that nearly all of these children are being medicated to improve their performance is a problem to be addressed another time.) I also work with kids whose parents think they need some kind of "enrichment." Except for a couple in high school, all of my students make A's and B's. Most of these children are interesting and lively until they start on their schoolwork. Then, they disappear and a completely passive child takes the place of the interesting one. They simply wait for the "answer" to be handed over. Most of them have learned that there is a system and that they can beat it by waiting. I have made it a habit in the last few years to ask each child what he studied that day. I have yet to get a specific answer from one child. Lest it be thought that these children are trying to be difficult, let me make it clear that these kids want to please and long to know the answers to my questions. They simply don't know what they studied that day! They don't have the vocabulary to tell me.

A great fraud is being perpetrated on them. Most of my students come to me with notes from their teachers instructing the parents to ask them about Paris, or Indians, or bears, or whatever the tidbit of the day was. And so I, and I suppose the parents, ask them. Even with this much prompting, I have yet to get a real answer involving nouns, and I have yet to see a note saying, "Wait a minute, back up, let's go over that again." This is why these kids are learning nothing while making A's and B's. No one expects them to learn anything. Of course, that list of things I used as examples of subjects studied illustrates one of the biggest problems in our educational system. Our kids are introduced to a little of this and then a little of that, as if their goal in life is to be a *Jeopardy* contestant.

Perhaps the most puzzling part of this mess is the amount of time the schools spend every day teaching hygiene and what they call "life skills." (Reading, writing, and arithmetic are evidently not life skills.) When she was in the second grade, my daughter Virginia had two weeks of study on how to brush her teeth. Tolstoy didn't use as many pieces of paper writing *War and Peace* as our state government did on "How to Brush Your Teeth" handouts. (They are still handed out.) The ultimate irony is that, as soon as these kids reach junior high and high school, they will have nearly unlimited access to soft drinks in the school building. They will be encouraged to replace milk and water with these drinks by the same system that worked so hard to ensure their dental health in elementary school.

One of my students is an intelligent 11-year-old boy, the son of a third-generation dairy farmer here in Henry County. He wants to be the fourth to farm his family's place. He is one of those students who can't tell me what he's done in school that day when he comes to my house afterward. After several years of tutoring, he can, however, write an excellent paragraph about how to raise a bucket calf, or rake a field of hay, or prepare a calf to show at the state fair. This great kid gets in trouble about once a week—but only when he and his buddies are in the "How to get along with others" class. They are *bored* in this class, and so, in the grand tradition of little boys, they act up. Why shouldn't they? This boy has a great family and cultural life. He needs to know how to read well, to use mathematics, to understand the science of how things work, and he needs to know where he is. What he needs to know to be a good farmer is, by any standard I honor, a great education. This, of course, would never occur to the powers-that-be who run our state school system. This boy doesn't need hours wasted learning how to be nice to other people based on some *Sesame Street* idea of political correctness.

I mentioned earlier that raising these kinds of questions requires at least attempting to find answers, and while I see no good answers for a huge, failing public-school system, I have found an answer for my children. Two days a week, my daughters attend a cottage school in Louisville called the Highlands Latin School. Cottage schools are little schools put together to support homeschooling families. The Highlands Latin School was founded by an amazing woman named Cheryl Lowe, a former public-school chemistry teacher. Mrs. Lowe is a self-taught Latin scholar, a writer of Latin textbooks, and one of the most inspiring teachers I've ever seen. Besides Latin, our school offers logic, classical history, mathematics, English, literature, and, this past semester, a course for high-schoolers on three of Shakespeare's plays. This school does what schools are intended to do: It puts students together with teachers who have mastered a discipline. As Mrs. Lowe says, "You can't solve all the problems first; you simply must start somewhere."

Americans are uncomfortable with the idea of a saving remnant, but I am afraid that is what we've come to. We must be true conservatives who conserve what is worth saving—starting with our children.

Mary Berry Smith and her family raise cattle, chickens, organic vegetables, tobacco, and grapes on their farm in New Castle, Kentucky.

LIBERAL ARTS

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—*from the April 27, 2002, issue of the* Caspar (WY) Star-Tribune

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by Srdja Trifkovic

Transatlantic Rifts

In the immediate aftermath of September 11, Europe was closer to America, politically and emotionally, than at any time since World War II. For a moment, the threat of Islamic terrorism had rekindled a dormant awareness on both sides of the Atlantic of just how much the Old Continent and the New World have in common. Only seven months later, however, as President Bush completed his four-nation European tour, transatlantic relations were more strained than at any time since the Cold War. The editorialist for the conservative German daily *Saarbruecker Zeitung* summed it up on May 23 by noting that, since the fall of the Wall, "the United States became more American, and Europe more European: differences of opinion came into the foreground that had always existed but have never played a prominent role."

While a few thousand leftist demonstrators chanting abuse from the curbs of Berlin and Paris could be dismissed as irrelevant and unrepresentative, the sense of disenchantment with Washington felt by the members of Europe's political and economic mainstream—including America's friends and reliable fellow Cold Warriors of yore—cannot be disregarded.

U.S. Middle East policy, because of its pro-Israeli bias, is perceived throughout Europe as a hindrance to the quest for peace. President Bush's unwillingness or, worse still, inability to put any real pressure on Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon is seen in European capitals as puzzling and counterproductive. According to Bronwen Maddox, the foreign affairs editor of the *Times* of London, such views prompt some Americans to respond by accusing Europe of being anti-semitic. Jonathan Steele noted in the *Guardian* ("New York is starting to feel like Brezhnev's Moscow," May 16) that the debate on such issues in America suffers from "a stifling conformity which muzzles public discourse on US foreign policy, the war on terrorism and Israel":

> "If people knew I held these views, I wouldn't be able to stay in this job," an old college friend confided as I passed through the city for a few days last week . . . His subversive views on the Middle East, if uttered in Europe, would raise no eyebrows: Ariel Sharon has no vision or strategy; his tactics on the West Bank are counter-productive; the American media are failing to report adequately on the suffering of innocent Palestinians in cities ransacked by Israeli troops . . . Listening to these anguished but private complaints suddenly reminded me of the Soviet Union of the Brezhnev era when lower-level officials, journalists and other fringe members of the regime sat around their kitchen tables, expressing their true views only to family and close friends . . . To enforce this abandonment of reasoned argument in the name of a witch-hunt against terrorists, a strange alliance of evangelical Christians in Congress has come together with the leaders of American Jewish organisations who normally support the Democratic party . . . To judge from the east coast today, the middle-aged liberal intelligentsia is letting itself be intimidated into taking the wrong side.

In France, *Les Echos* commented that "Europe regrets that America's pressure on Israel is not more forceful," while *Le Figaro* noted that, "in the U.S., any criticism of Ariel Sharon is immediately equated with anti-Semitism."

Regarding Iraq, America's friends and allies—including the ever-pliant Tony Blair—simply do not agree that Saddam Hussein is a threat to the rest of the world. As Jean-Jacques Mevel pointed out in *Le Figaro* on May 24, European leaders remain "equally unconvinced about President Bush's tie-in between the 'axis of evil' and the September 11 attacks." Italy's *Corriere della Sera* resentfully opined on May 23 that "the apostle of the war on terrorism is dumping on Europe America's fears and his desire to attack Iraq."

Some Europeans suspected—but did not say publicly—that the zeal in Washington for the random broadening of the "war against terrorism" beyond the verifiable culprits for September 11 has more to do with America's "passionate attachment" in the Middle East than with a sober assessment of Western security and political interests. Robert Fisk, writing in the *Independent* on May 25, was one of the few commentators to say so openly:

> So now Osama bin Laden is Hitler. And Saddam Hussein is Hitler. And George Bush is fighting the Nazis. Not since Menachem Begin fantasised to President Reagan that he felt he was attacking Hitler in Berlin . . . have we had to listen to claptrap like this. But the fact that we Europeans had to do so in the Bundestag—and, for the most part, in respectful silence—was extraordinary . . . "He's a dictator who gassed his own people," Mr Bush reminded us for the two thousandth time, omitting as always to mention that the Kurds whom Saddam viciously gassed were fighting for Iran and that the United States, at the time, was on Saddam's side . . . In the United States, the Bush administration is busy terrorising Americans. There will be nuclear attacks, bombs in high-rise apartment blocks, on the Brooklyn bridge, men with exploding belts—note how carefully the ruthless Palestinian war against Israeli colonisation of the West Bank is being strapped to America's ever weirder "war on terror"—and yet more aircraft suiciders. If you read the words of President Bush, Vice-President Dick Cheney and the ridiculous national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice . . . you'll find they've issued more threats against Americans than Mr bin Laden.

But the key point, according to Fisk, is

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the growing evidence that Israel's policies have become America's policies: Iran, Lebanon, and Syria, as well as Iraq, are all threatened by the United States. But Ariel Sharon, who Israel's own inquiry determined was personally responsible for the Sabra and Shatila massacre, is—according to President Bush—"a man of peace." In the same vein,

> America praises Pakistani President Musharraf for his support in the "war on terror," but remains silent when he arranges a dictatorial "referendum" to keep him in power. America's enemies, remember, hate the US for its "democracy". So is General Musharraf going to feel the heat? Forget it . . . If Pakistan and India go to war, I'll wager a lot that Washington will come down for undemocratic Pakistan against democratic India. Across the former Soviet southern Muslim republics, America is building air bases, helping to pursue the "war on terror" against any violent Muslim Islamist groups that dare to challenge the local dictators . . . In the meantime, Mr Bush goes on to do exactly what his enemies want; to provoke Muslims and Arabs, to praise their enemies and demonise their countries, to bomb and starve Iraq and give uncritical support to Israel and maintain his support for the dictators of the Middle East.

In Spain, the independent daily *El Mundo*, noting that U.S. policy in the Middle East is "unilaterally pro-Israeli," suggested that President Bush should be thanked for coming to call for unity of action, "but it would be better to wait until he proves with actions the interest he expresses." The Dutch daily *Algemeen Dagblad*'s May 24 editorial said that Mr. Bush's speeches amounted to no more than an urgent repetition of the call for a war against terrorism, betraying his

> misconception of the differences in a range of fields between the United States and Europe, which have emerged after the terrorist attacks in the United States . . . The looming contradictions between Washington and the European allies remain undiscussed.

The leading Greek daily *Kathimerini* concluded on May 23 that "the regular use of the word 'chasm' regarding U.S.-European relations is a sign of the existing climate."

An additional source of friction was the Bush administration's decision to withdraw the U.S. signature from the treaty establishing the International Criminal Court (ICC). That signature was deliberately and mischievously left behind by Bill Clinton in the final weeks of his presidency, in the full knowledge that it would never be ratified. Assorted European *bien-pensants*, mainly from the left, lambasted Bush's "unsigning" as "unprecedented" in the history of international law. There were a few dissenters, however. An editorial in the *Daily Telegraph* stated that the Bush team may have remembered the decision by the British government to allow the arrest of General Pinochet on its own soil under a Spanish judicial warrant:

> That precedent can only have fueled Washington's fears that the proposed [ICC] might be used to promote politically motivated prosecutions against American servicemen, and even politicians . . . But there are plenty of persistent lawyers out there with a political axe to grind who would relish the prospect of dragging the mighty U.S. through the courts. The Americans can hardly be blamed for seeking to deny them the opportunity. Rather than trying to change Washington's mind over the ICC, as [British Foreign Secretary Jack] Straw indicated he would yesterday, the government should take these worries seriously . . . There is a tendency to try to use international systems to turn America into a pariah nation. Britain should have no part in this. There is no proven need for a permanent [ICC].

By contrast, Denmark's *Information* called the U.S. decision "a catastrophe for justice," while the *Irish Times* bewailed "the fact that U.S. diplomats successfully watered down the text during talks leading to its adoption, and then walked away from it." In Holland, *NRC Handelsblad* declared that

> the rescinding of the American signature to the Statute of Rome is destructive of America's reputation as champion of international justice . . . The most important victim, in the near future, of this, will be the international rule of law itself.

Thank goodness! The "international rule of law" is incompatible with the constitutional principle that only the 50 states and the federal government have the authority to prosecute and try individuals for crimes committed in the United States. Judicial power is "vested in one Supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as Congress may, from time to time, ordain and establish." No tribunal that is not established under the authority of the Constitution should ever be allowed to exercise jurisdiction over citizens of the United States for crimes committed on American soil.

Trade disputes may prove far more intractable in transatlantic relations than the ICC or even the rifts over the Middle East and terrorism. In addition, the President's Farm Bill, which will primarily help agribusiness rather than small farmers and which provoked remarkably little attention in the United States, is universally condemned by European analysts who think that the perceived hypocrisy of U.S. trade policy will have repercussions in other areas, including the war against terror. While preaching to others the gospel of open markets, President Bush, Europeans believe, is buying prairie votes with taxpayer-funded largesse.

Unilateralism in pursuit of rationally defined objectives in world affairs and protectionism as a means of leveling the trading field are not necessarily bad; but to practice them while preaching the virtues of multilateralism and free trade to the rest of the world is to invite ridicule and spite. The contradictions of the President's policies carry a price that may not have become fully obvious during his European tour but may yet cost him the presidency two years from now. ©

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THE OLD REPUBLIC

The Costs of War

by Clark Stooksbury

I first learned of the improbably named Smedley Darlington Butler while attending Marine Corps boot camp in South Carolina. At Parris Island, we were taught that Butler was, along with Dan Daly, one of two U.S. Marines to have been awarded the Medal of Honor twice. Along with five-time Navy Cross recipient Louis B. "Chesty" Puller, they served as heroic examples of the warrior ethos. Still, we never learned in any great detail about the lives or wartime experiences of any of them.

Butler was a prominent public figure in the early decades of the 20th century, well known for being a soldier's soldier disdainful of military bureaucrats, a highly decorated war hero, and an advocate and enforcer of Prohibition in the 1920's as Philadelphia's Director of Public Safety. From his position in the Marine Corps, Butler was an eyewitness to almost every imperial encounter of the United States in the first three decades of the 20th century—from the Philippines and China to Nicaragua, Mexico, and Haiti. America has produced other martial heroes, but Smedley Butler's views on the wisdom and virtues of these adventures, and the forcefulness with which he expressed them, set him apart from the ordinary war hero.

One of the issues that drove Butler to anger was the misuse of the Marine Corps for the benefit of specific business interests. While intervening in Nicaragua in 1910, Butler wrote to his parents that

> What makes me mad is that the whole revolution is inspired and financed by Americans who have wildcat investments down here and want to make them good by putting in a Government which will declare a monopoly in their favor. The whole business is rotten to the core and I am ashamed to think that a Republican [Taft] administration is, if anything, assisting the revolution.

Similar issues motivated U.S. entry into Haiti in 1915, when that country was indebted to banks in the United States, France, and Germany. The Marine Corps occupied Haiti until 1934, three years after Butler retired. While Butler was there, he established a police force led by the Marine Corps. One of his duties was to assist the Haitians in drawing up a constitution acceptable to the U.S. government. When the Haitian legislature threatened to institute a constitution that the U.S. government disliked, Butler was ordered to dissolve that body. Robert Moskin set the scene for this incident in his *U.S. Marine Corps Story*:

> [Butler] was greeted with loud hissing. The gendarmes on duty cocked their rifles. Butler ordered them to put down their weapons. He handed the decree to the presiding officer, who, instead of reading to the delegates, began a tirade against it. The hall was in an uproar. Tables and chairs were thrown over, deputies shouted and surged forward. The gendarmes again prepared to shoot. Finally, the presiding officer rang a bell for order and read the decree, declaring the Assembly dissolved and directed the hall cleared. The gendarmes locked the doors. Butler grabbed the decree and stuffed it in his pocket. He would use it later in a U.S. Senate hearing when his opponents charged that the president's decree had never existed.

After a couple of decades of involvement in the folly of American intervention in places like Haiti, Butler spent most of the rest of his career in the United States at bases in Quantico, Virginia, and San Diego, California. His most memorable post in this era was outside of the Marine Corps, when he took a leave of absence to serve as Director of Public Safety in the city of Philadelphia. Although he ultimately failed to make Prohibition work, he did so with panache. His biographer, Hans Schmidt, reported in *Maverick Marine* that the "first forty-eight hour shock assault featured raids on speakeasies, cabarets, candy stores, brothels, pool rooms, and cider saloons throughout the city." Fearful police officials in New York City and Baltimore stepped up efforts to intercept a criminal exodus from the City of Brotherly Love.

The only lasting effect Butler had on alcohol consumption came in his decision to become a teetotaler after his Philadelphia experience. He made no progress in controlling another personal vice, as one Philadelphia mother complained to the secretary of the Navy.

> I hope when Mr. Butler's leave expires that you will try and teach him that a General should be a gentleman and a leader such as Pershing and Wood and not a common soldier. We teach our children it is low and vulgar to swear, and they listen to Butler over Radio and say, "Mother, General Butler swears all the time." He should set an example in his own conduct.

Butler never learned such propriety, but his more than three decades in the Marine Corps taught him many lessons, one of which was never to give up or look back. He did not let a disastrous defeat in the 1932 Republican primary for a Pennsylvania Senate seat deter him. He adopted the cause of the Bonus Expeditionary Force, a group of World War I veterans who marched on Washington to petition Congress for payments that weren't due until 1945. He briefly camped out with the group and told them, shortly before they were violently dispersed by the Army, that

> you hear folks call you fellows tramps, but they didn't call you that in '17 and '18. I never saw such fine soldiers. I never saw such discipline . . . You have as much right to lobby here as the United States Steel Corporation . . .

Though he often spoke out on economic issues, Smedley Butler devoted most of the remainder of his life to opposing war. He wasn't a pacifist. He referred to himself as a "military isolationist" and favored a strong national defense. But his philosophy is alien to today's political elites: Butler believed that national

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defense actually meant defending the nation.

Several times in his career, Smedley Butler had seen his Marine Corps misused for the benefit of various corporate interests, and he did not like it. He referred to himself as a "racketeer for capitalism." In a 1935 article for the socialist magazine *Common Sense*, Butler wrote:

> I helped make Mexico and especially Tampico safe for American interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of a half a dozen Central American republics for the benefit of Wall Street. The record of Racketeering is long. I helped purify Nicaragua for the international house of the Brown Brothers in 1909-1912. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. I helped make Honduras "right" for American fruit companies in 1903. In China in 1927 I helped see to it that Standard went its way unmolested . . . Looking back on it, I feel I might have given Al Capone a few hints. The best *he* could do was to operate his racket in three city districts. We Marines operated on three *continents*.

His classic statement against war came in the pamphlet, *War is a Racket* (WIAR), published in 1935. WIAR succinctly explained who profits from war, who pays the cost, and how to end the racket. Butler viewed particular business interests as being the prime beneficiaries, not only in the sense that the military was often sent into harm's way to serve a special interest, but also because those businesses benefitted from military spending. He listed the companies, such as Anaconda Copper and U.S. Steel, along with their earnings between 1910 and 1914, compared to their earnings from 1914 to 1918. Not surprisingly, the figures in the latter category grew by leaps and bounds.

Butler may have relied too much on this line of reasoning. His own experience provided equally strong evidence of the ways in which business interests profit from war—by having the military sent into harm's way in order to bail out their interests abroad. More importantly, he ignored the way that war aggrandizes the state and politicians, summarized in Randolph Bourne's classic dictum: "War is the health of the state." Woodrow Wilson, under whom Butler served, assumed near-dictatorial powers by dragging the country into war.

The costs of war were left for others to pay. Soldiers, primarily, paid with their bodies, their lives, and sometimes their souls:

> I have visited eighteen government hospitals for veterans. In them are a total of about 50,000 destroyed men—men who were the pick of the nation eighteen years ago. The very able chief surgeon at the government hospital at Milwaukee . . . told me that mortality among veterans is three times as great as among those who stayed home. Boys with a normal viewpoint were taken out of the fields and offices and factories and classrooms and put into the ranks. There they were remolded; they were made over; they were made to "about face"; to regard murder as the order of the day. They were put shoulder to shoulder and, through mass psychology, they were entirely changed . . . Then suddenly, we discharged them and told them to make another "about face"! This time they had to do their own readjusting, sans mass psychology, sans officers' aid and advice, sans nation-wide propaganda. We didn't need them any more . . . Many, too many, of these fine young boys are eventually destroyed, mentally, because they could not make that final "about face."

Smedley Butler outlined several steps to curb war frenzy, including the compelling idea to have declarations of war subject to a vote of those "who would be called upon to do the fighting and the dying." After all, there

> wouldn't be very much sense in having the 76-year-old president of a munitions factory . . . or the cross-eyed manager of a uniform manufacturing plant—all of whom see visions of tremendous profits in the event of war—voting on whether the nation should go to war or not.

In WIAR, Butler also argued that the proper use of the U.S. military is to defend U.S. soil. Currently, our Armed Forces are better situated to defend Okinawa than Omaha. He specifically proposed keeping the Army in the United States and limiting ships and planes to within 200 and 500 miles of the coast, respectively.

Although flawed in places, WIAR is a powerful antiwar statement. Butler focused attention on certain beneficiaries of war and suggested ways to curtail them. Toward the end, he reviewed the platitudes that American doughboys had been sent into the trenches to die for:

> When our boys were sent off to war they were told it was a "war to make the world safe for democracy" and a "war to end all wars." Well, eighteen years after, the world has less democracy than it had then. Besides, what business is it of ours whether Russia or Germany or England or France or Italy or Austria live under democracies or monarchies? Whether they are Fascists or Communists? Our problem is to preserve our own democracy.

Smedley Butler didn't live to see the U.S. enter the war that he devoted the last several years of his life to stopping. He died in June 1940. In those last years, he remained true to his beliefs. He occasionally spoke before a communist front group called the League Against War and Fascism, but he broke with them over the Spanish Civil War. At one meeting, in his blunt fashion, he asked, "What the hell is it our business what's going on in Spain?"

In early 1940, a tired and cynical Smedley Butler canceled a speech for health reasons and told the head of a Republican women's group,

> I feel sure there is no use talking any more about this war business. The people of America are fools. If they want to have their children shot in order to keep Franklin Roosevelt on a pedestal, they will just have to do it.

America sorely needs another Smedley Butler. His message of military isola-

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tionism is alien among our political and journalistic elites. In the wake of the ghastly attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, this country may soon be involved in its most extensive war since Vietnam. Neoconservative chickenhawks such as William Kristol and Robert Kagan have been beating the drums for war with several countries in the Middle East. Kristol and other talk-show commandos do a lot of talking about war. But, as Smedley Darlington Butler would point out, they won't do the dying.

Clark Stooksbury writes from Knoxville, Tennessee.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

MLK and Terrorism

by Paul Gottfried

On February 12, an endorsement of the United States' war against terrorism, organized by the "nonpartisan" Institute for American Values, went out to President Bush and the national media over the signatures of what the U.S. State Department described as "sixty prominent U.S. academics." The term "prominent academic" can now be applied to Bill Kristol, Hillel Fradkin, and Midge Decter.

If only the signatories had not strained so hard to look smart, they might have confined their support to a patriotic cheer or simply invoked the time-honored argument that regimes are supposed to protect their citizens or subjects against violence. The signatories (really, the authors) cannot figure out whether they are pushing a particular religion or set of doctrines. They say they are not, but even those who claim to belong to "secular traditions" are convinced "that invoking God's authority to kill or maim human beings is immoral and contrary to faith in God." It is strange to receive theistic instruction from self-avowed secularists who obviously have not read the Pentateuch—particularly the commands given to the children of Israel to exterminate Amalekites and other morally reprobate tribes. Such acts are not only allowed but, even more shockingly, are laid as commandments upon the Israelites, whether fighting idolatry or settling their land. Does this mean that the Old Testament (or possibly only Deuteronomy and Judges, where such teachings abound) runs counter to "faith in God," because it contradicts what "sixty prominent academics" say on terrorism? Or are all religions that contradict this new Sanhedrin of Sixty hereby rescinded?

While the signatories say that they are not speaking as members of any recognizable confession, they hint broadly at a worldview that they would like to have the entire human race adopt. The war they endorse (and, it is reasonable to infer, hope to expand), is based on a "universal religious" principle, which they happily ascribe to Islam as well. They reject the charge that

> these values are not universal at all, but instead derive particularly from Western, largely Christian civilization. We disagree. We recognize our own civilization's achievements but we believe that all people are created equal.

Their "universal" credo goes on to reaffirm the moral validity of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the soundness of the teaching of "Dr." Martin Luther King, Jr., that "the arc of the moral universe is long but bends toward justice, not just for the few or lucky, but for all people." Supposedly, King's reformulation of classical and medieval natural-law thinking becomes universally palatable once it is associated with a black socialist practicing civil disobedience. But King was specifically addressing American laws, which enforced racial separation in education and in public accommodations in some states and municipalities. (Before his death, he would also invoke his variation on natural-law theory to justify political interventions against, for example, municipalities that failed to pay garbage workers what he considered to be a just wage.) Whether King was right or wrong to oppose these laws and to encourage massive civil disobedience is a question for historical debate, but whether his partisan speeches are the demonstration of universal moral laws, on behalf of which we are bombing Afghanistan (and may soon be bombing Iraq), is an entirely different matter.

What the signatories may mean is that everyone should believe that the U.S. government has a moral duty to punish those it rightly suspects of practicing terrorism against us. An honest person would have no problem with punishing guilty terrorists but, unlike the signatories, would not pretend that all religions enshrine a "universal" dogma that happens to be his own. Moreover, it is meaningless to assert that "we are by far the Western world's most religious society." What exactly does that signify in a country in which most of the Christian population knows next to nothing about the Bible or (as my colleagues say) about biblical storylines and, according to Gallup polls, believes that the New Testament endorses homosexual marriage? In a country where even Santa Claus, not to mention Christmas, has been driven out of public schools, is it true to assert that "spiritually, our separation of church and state permits religion to be religion, by detaching it from the coercive power of the state"? While not all of the signatories would disagree with this criticism (in fact, some have written voluminously on the same problems), each one, by signing the "letter," vouches for a counterfactual picture of church-state relations in the United States. Furthermore, contrary to the letter, there is no evidence that the present American regime constitutes a

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religiously defensible golden mean between theocracy and secularism.

On page after page, the signatories tip their hand by calling attention to the Neoconservative Book of Common Prayer, featuring Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address and King's "Letter From Birmingham Jail." Such allusions remind me of Mr. Dick in David Copperfield. A true obsessive, the perpetual houseguest of David's aunt could not end a conversation without babbling on about the execution of Charles I. In a similar but far less charming way, neocons cannot talk about anything (indeed, one wonders whether they can simply order a hot dog at a ballgame), without bringing up Lincoln, the American refounder, and M.L.K., the purifier of a once-racist nation. While Thomas Fleming insists that the King references are only a bumbling attempt to come up with a natural-law argument for a war that the signatories propose to defend, my own thoughts are darker. These references may be the homage paid to those whom the neocons can never put out of their heads, the same way Dickens' character obsessed about King Charles the Martyr.

Some who signed "What We're Fighting For: A Letter from America" may have had to swallow hard before affixing their shaky signatures. For those who would like to continue to believe in their general, if now compromised, intellectual honesty, it is possible to hope that this was the case, at least for a few.

Paul Gottfried, a professor of humanities at Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania, is the author of After Liberalism: Mass Democracy in the Managerial State *(Princeton).*

POLITICS

Conservative Balance-of-Power

by Greg Kaza

A remarkable yet unreported trend in U.S. politics over the past decade is the balance-of-power held by conservative political parties in federal elections, if we define balance-of-power as a vote total equal to or greater than the difference in votes between the Democratic and Republican candidates in a race. Some media pundits noted that Green Party presidential candidate Ralph Nader held the balance-of-power in 2000, both in the overall popular vote and in eight states. Yet Reform Party candidate Patrick J. Buchanan also held it in five states (Florida, Iowa, New Mexico, Oregon, and Wisconsin) and came within two tenths of one percent of achieving it in the popular vote.

Since the Newt Gingrich-engineered Republican takeover of the U.S. House in 1994, conservatives have held balance-of-power in at least one race in which a Democrat was victorious in each election cycle. They stood for office as candidates of such third parties as the American Independent, Constitution, Patriot, Right-to-Life, and New York Conservative parties. The races in which they held balance-of-power, allowing Democrats to win, were in California (District 36), Oregon (1), and Pennsylvania (15) in 1994; Massachusetts (6) in 1996; Washington (8) in 1998; and Minnesota (6) in 2000. The Democrats who benefited, arguably, from GOP indifference to paleoconservative issues were Jane Harman of California; Elizabeth Furse of Oregon; Paul McHale of Pennsylvania; John Tierney of Massachusetts; Jay Inslee of Washington; and Bill Luther of Minnesota. Only Representatives Furse and McHale no longer serve in Congress.

Conservative balance-of-power has more significance today in a closely divided House (221 Republicans, 212 Democrats, and two independents) than after the 1994 election, when Republicans outnumbered Democrats, 230 to 204 (with one independent). In addition to the six elections in which Democrats were victorious, Republicans won four other House races in which conservatives held balance-of-power. A mere shift of five seats would return the House to Democratic control.

The late Murray N. Rothbard termed balance-of-power "the spoiler tradition in American politics." The trend can be traced to the mid-1960's when the New York Conservative Party began fielding candidates to oppose moderate Republicans. Conservative Party cofounder Kieran O'Doherty failed against Republican Congressman John V. Lindsay, a Barry Goldwater critic, in New York's 17th District in 1964. But *National Review* founder William F. Buckley held balance-of-power as the conservative candidate in New York's 1965 mayoral race against the victorious Lindsay. The Conservative Party has held balance-of-power more than any other right-wing party, though the Libertarian Party, founded in 1971, has achieved it far more frequently (49 times), including in six U.S. Senate and 14 House races won by Democrats. The Conservative Party's greatest triumph was the election of Buckley's brother James to the U.S. Senate in 1970. New York Republican insiders still termed the Conservatives "spoilers." Indeed, Democrats won close House races featuring Conservatives in 1966 (District 27) and 1974 (2). Since the late 1970's, the Conservative Party has relied more on New York's unique cross-endorsement law that allows it, like the Right To Life Party, to endorse federal Republicans. Still, in New York's 19th District in 1996, Conservative Joseph J. Dio Guardi held balance-of-power against Republican Sue Kelly and Democrat Richard S. Klein.

Conservative candidates have held balance-of-power far more frequently since the mid-1960's than left-of-center parties like California's Peace & Freedom Party or the Naderite Greens. Yet the Socialist Party, circa 1900-1920, held it more often than any other 20th-century third other party. Statistician Charles Ferris Gettemy, following the 1904 election, shared his findings with President Theodore Roosevelt, a New York Republican. Mr. Roosevelt, in a February 1, 1905 reply that might be misinterpreted today, termed the Socialist vote a significant development. Mr. Roosevelt played the role of spoiler in 1912 when his third-party Bull Moose candidacy cost Republican President William Howard Taft the election.

During the 20th century, Socialist candidates held balance-of-power in 221 elections, including 120 races lost by Democrats. Democratic presidents Woodrow Wilson (1913-19) and Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1933-45) co-opted key planks from the Socialist platform (child-labor laws, income and inheritance taxes, unemployment insurance, Social Security) after the Socialist balance-of-power grew. Wilson's papers reveal that he met a Socialist delegation in January 1916. Likewise, FDR met perennial Socialist presidential candidate Norman Thomas many times at the White House. In 1928, FDR had been narrowly elected New York governor (49 percent), defeating Republican Albert Ottinger (48.4 percent). Socialist Louis

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Waldman held balance-of-power that year (2.7 percent). FDR joked afterward that he was "the one-half-of-one-percent governor." An astute political entrepreneur, FDR had good reason to co-opt Socialist planks. As David A. Shannon writes, "The story of the decline of the Socialist Party since 1933 is, for the most part, the story of the political success of the New Deal."

It is difficult to imagine a Republican president conferring with such Reform Party candidates as populist H. Ross Perot or conservative Pat Buchanan or a Republican House leadership or Senate minority co-opting their issues. The Reform Party has held balance-of-power in only a half-dozen federal elections, including Kentucky's 1998 U.S. Senate contest. Beltway strategists have argued that the Green Party is a greater threat to Democrats then right-wing third parties are to Republicans. Yet the Greens have not held balance-of-power in a single Senate race.

Beltway strategists are less credible when confronting Libertarian balance-of-power. Since 1994, the Libertarian Party has held balance-of-power in three Senate elections won by Democrats: California in 1994 (Barbara Feinstein); Nevada in 1998 (Harry Reid); and Washington in 2000 (Maria Cantwell). Libertarian balance-of-power, especially in the American West, grew in the 1990's, as the party fielded more candidates. The same statistical trend is apparent in the history of the Socialist and Progressive parties in the early 20th century. Republicans, who lost the Senate to Democrats in 2001 and enter the 2002 election with a two-seat (51-49) deficit, should find this trend of some interest and co-opt a plank or two.

That, however, is unlikely to happen. Consider the treatment of Dr. Ron Paul, a cultural, pro-life conservative and the Libertarian Party's 1988 presidential candidate. Dr. Paul, a former U.S. Air Force flight surgeon, was one of only three conservatives serving in the House in 1976 who endorsed Ronald Reagan against moderate Republican incumbent Gerald R. Ford. He re-entered the House in 1997, representing Texas' 14th District as a Republican. Since his return, Dr. Paul has introduced 124 bills in the House, and not one has passed the Republican-controlled chamber.

Greg Kaza, a retired Michigan state legislator, is the executive director of the Little Rock-based Arkansas Policy

RELIGION

Memo to Worship Leaders: Shut Up

by Jeremy Lott

It is often said that former Princeton president Jonathan Edwards, the man credited with setting fire to the tinderbox that became the First Great Awakening, was a fiery preacher. His message was certainly incendiary, but by modern standards he was nothing of the sort.

According to minister Victor Shepherd, Edwards may have "thundered like a cataract into which there poured the streams of fathomless spirituality," but he did so quietly and in a monotone voice. Edwards' most famous sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," was read by the New England divine "word-for-word, hunched over the lectern, rarely lifting his head to look at the congregation." Martyn Lloyd Jones rightly judged that "no man was further removed from the violence of a ranting traveling evangelist than Jonathan Edwards."

If I read him correctly, there was a theological method to Edwards' madness. He believed he was expounding God's very Word, which needed no enthusiasm on his part in order to accomplish its purpose. Such distractions might even work at cross-purposes with what the Holy Spirit was trying to accomplish.

In this post-theological era, the one issue that can turn the most harmonious American church into a chest-thumping, hair-pulling, mud-wrestling wreck is worship. Whether or not to use an electric guitar seems, to me, a trifling matter. But let someone bring an ax on stage in any middle-aged congregation, and then set back and watch the generational fallout. Seniors are often pitted against (relative) youth in a nasty fight that they know they will eventually lose through attrition. The younger group, for its part, has to choose between compromise and evolution or outright rebellion and schism. My preferences are (slightly) more modern, but, while that older order may have been too formulaic, it at least avoided giving the "worship leader" the prominence that he (or, often, she) enjoys today.

Readers from a more liturgical setting might wish to know what a "worship leader" is. He is not analogous to the choir director, the organist, or even the music director of yesteryear. Rather, worship leaders today occupy a new, more expansive role in the life of the Church. To state simply that the worship leader is responsible for picking the music, lining up musicians and singers, and leading worship is a little bit like saying that Beethoven wrote some music or that cheerleaders make a valuable contribution to team spirit. Worship leaders don't merely sing; they emote. They determine when the congregation should rise and fall, and they try their very best to attune themselves to any stirrings of the Spirit. And they talk—oh, how they talk.

In the many, many cases that I've observed, nearly unanimously, the worship leader talks entirely too much. However much he may have rehearsed, his performance comes off as spontaneous and unscripted—and, therefore, rambling. Often, what he has to say amounts to a free-form sermon: *Live for God! Make a decision! Commit your life to Him! You, too, can change your life! Jesus loves you! No, really, He does! Exclaim! the good news of Jesus Christ!*

To doubt these people's motives would be to do them a disservice. Still, at some point, it becomes wrong not to say that there is a person employed by the church to preach the actual sermon called a "pastor," and he is probably better equipped than the worship leader to bring the Word of God to the congregation.

I am not calling for a return to the staid formalism that Florence King describes in stories of her High Church childhood. The congregation was not to sing too-vigorous hymns, she says, because, "after all, someone might get carried away and fall into religious ecstasy, and you mustn't do that sort of thing in church." But it seems to me that the Spirit can be drowned out as easily as He can be ignored. Put another way, everybody remembers Edwards' famous sermon, but nobody remembers what hymns they sang that Sunday.

To worship leaders, I say: Please, I beg you, don't talk. Just sing.

Jeremy Lott is coauthor (with the Rev. Dr. Lawrence VanBeek) of the forthcoming The Case for Enoch.

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by George McCartney

Bitten and Smitten

Where would we be without *eros*? Would Antony have thrown away an empire? Would Dante have written *The Divine Comedy*? Would Bill Clinton have scuttled his ambitions so shamefully? Would Peter Parker have become Spider-Man? Depending on our character, *eros* can lead us to greatness or reduce us to squalor, as this month's films amply illustrate.

In *Spider-Man*, director Sam Raimi understands the role *eros* can play even—maybe *especially*—in a comic-book fantasy. He proved this 12 years ago with his low-budget *Darkman*, a wonderfully stylish and inventive compendium of superhero tropes. In *Spider-Man*, he has been given a much larger budget and the special effects to go with it, but it's his comic-book hero sensibility that really carries the day. Take the scene in which the 17-year-old orphan Peter Parker (Tobey Maguire) is about to be spider-bitten into a wholly new existence. Until this moment, he's been a dutiful ward of his loving Aunt May (Rosemary Harris) and Uncle Ben (Cliff Robertson), an honor student and a feckless nerd, mooning over Mary Jane or MJ (Kirsten Dunst), the girl next door for whom he's pined since the fourth grade. During a class trip to Columbia University's science lab, he manages to steer MJ into his camera range for a school-newspaper photo opportunity. She coyly begs him not to make her look ugly, and, for once, he's not too tongue-tied to risk a gallantry: "There's no chance of that with someone as beautiful as you." You know it's his first romantic line, and the expression on his face tells us he's as surprised as we are to have delivered it with such *savoir-faire*. As he does so, however, a genetically altered lab spider spins itself down onto his hand and sinks its pincers into his flesh, sealing his fate. He's smitten and bitten.

Two scenes later, we see him awakening in his uncle's modest house in working-class Queens. Standing in front of his mirror, he's astonished to see his formerly slight torso bulging with muscle. He's equally surprised to find he no longer needs his nerd glasses to see himself in the mirror or, for that matter, to see MJ through her bedroom window directly across from his own. He's so thrilled with his changes, he runs downstairs and, with a perfectly timed handspring off the hall wall, leaps the banister and heads for the door. Uncle Ben urges him to have some breakfast, but this kid's got no time for flapjacks. Not with MJ within his super sight. Ben smiles at his wife. "Teenagers," he says with mock exasperation. "Their raging hormones; it's always the same."

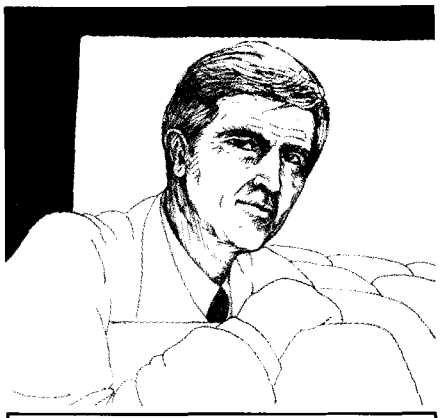
Here as elsewhere, Raimi is a master storyteller packing his scenes with visual shorthand that vividly connects all the dots. In this sequence, he gives us a scaled-down dissertation on comic-book appeal. The advent of superpowers has typically been the genre's metaphor for the passage from boy to man. That's why 12-year-olds are especially drawn to comic books. Their bodies are poised for great and unsettling changes, and they're understandably ambivalent about leaving the safety of childhood. In comics, they get to see guys have it both ways. In their civvies, they're quite ordinary, usually rather sheltered. When they don their spandex, however, they become fearless heroes capable of dealing with anything the world can throw at them. And, when they take off their costumes, they get to go home, safe and sound once more. Can you think of a more appealing fantasy for a kid facing the trials of puberty?

So Peter goes into the world with his uncle's admonition ringing in his ears: "With great power comes great responsibility." This is delivered, tellingly enough, outside the New York Public Library. On the other side of the street is an illegal extreme-fighting arena where Peter intends to put his new powers to use as a paid participant. He wants to raise enough money to buy a car so he can impress MJ. It's a cleverly staged moment. Standing between a hall of disciplined reason and a venue of brute force, Peter must make his choice. Will he be a man or a punk? This is the question all late adolescents must answer, usually more than once. Under MJ's spell, Peter will answer it heroically. It's *eros* ennobling.

Although Raimi knows how to set up his themes, he also knows what's expected of him. He gives us the all-out special-effects treatment, but somehow he keeps it lighthearted. The pyrotechnics are almost human scale. As we follow Spider-Man's looping web swings through Manhattan's corridors of stone, we hear Maguire's voice yipping and yodeling with unaffected glee. He may consider his transformation as much a curse as a gift, but whenever he's in the air, he's all boy and entirely irrepressible.

Still, it's in the small moments that Raimi excels. Take a composition he repeats throughout the film: He places Maguire in the extreme foreground looking toward the camera as the background fills with one dire disturbance or another. We watch his face as he takes in his latest challenge and, with slow deliberation, decides how he'll deploy his powers to deal with it. Without a word spoken, we realize that Peter Parker hasn't changed after all. He's still the respectful, dutiful young man we first met. He's merely learning how to master his superpowers so that they will become an extension of the decency his guardians have instilled in him.

There's much to admire in this de-



Spider-Man

Produced and distributed by
Columbia Pictures
Directed by Sam Raimi
Screenplay by David Koepp

Y Tu Mamá También

Produced by Besame
Mucho Productions
Directed by Alfonso Cuarón
Screenplay by Alfonso
and Carlos Cuarón
Released by Twentieth Century Fox

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lightful entertainment, not the least of which is a scene in which Peter's Aunt May is reciting the Lord's Prayer as the Green Goblin, Spider-Man's archvillain, bursts into her bedroom. "Deliver us from evil," she continues before confronting him. Indeed.

Y Tu Mamá También, the highly touted film by Mexican director Alfonso Cuaron, also deals with teenage confusion. Here, however, the kids are so thoroughly besotted by *eros* that they merely succumb to desire. They're far too self-absorbed and indolent to let its power ennoble them. This is part of Cuaron's satiric intention. He wants to confront us with the moral vacuum of upper-class Mexican life. Satire, however, is supposed to leave us enlightened. Cuaron's merely left me depressed.

This film is the worst kind of pornography: the high-minded sort. I'm sure Cuaron would dispute this charge vehemently. He was on National Public Radio recently informing the admiring Terry Gross that his film is too important not to be seen by everyone aged 15 on up. Its full-press sex, he assured Terry, was merely incidental to his biting social commentary. And, sure enough, as the film bounces from one erotic escapade to another, we're treated to the ceaseless drone of its narrator's dour observations. You'll undoubtedly be surprised to learn that Mexico went to the chihuahuas during its 71-year experiment with one-party democracy under the lately defeated Partido Revolucionarico Institucional (PRI) regime and that the country is engulfed in class antagonism, sexism, police abuse, official corruption, and, of course, drugs galore. These "revelations," I suppose, explain why so many enlightened reviewers have hailed *Mamá* as Mexico's latest breakthrough movie. It fuses the moral fervor of *The Grapes of Wrath* with the lubricious fun of *Debbie Does Dallas*. Well, no, that's not correct. The sex Cuaron serves up is deliberately made to look dispiriting. This is another of his winning points. On top of everything else, he reveals men to be completely useless when it comes to pleasing women. You can hear the murmuring in the dark, "How true, how true!" We get to see plenty of sex scenes performed in the buff, much of it staged in a manner that makes it seem that the performers didn't stop at mere simulation. But through it all you can see Cuaron behind his camera, waving an admonishing finger at the way Latin *machismo* suffocates women's rights.

Our eyes are opened to all these issues and more as we follow the libidinous adventures of two teenage wastrels, Tenoch Iturbide (Diego Luna), the son of a wealthy businessman connected to the corrupt Zedillo government of the late 1990's, and Julio Zapata (Gael García Bernal) a lower-middle-class kid from a broken family. (Note the names: Iturbide comes from a ruling-class family, and Zapata, of course, is the failed peasant revolutionary. Accordingly, the boys' troubled friendship is supposed to mirror Mexican class misunderstandings.)

Attending a family wedding at the Iturbide estate, the boys come across Luisa (Maribel Verdú), the wife of Tenoch's cousin. She's 28, bored, and, for the moment, on her own. The boys draw the only conclusion their undisciplined hormones will permit: She wants to be seduced. They invite her to come with them to a nonexistent beach they snickeringly call the "Mouth of Heaven." It's their idea of clever sexual innuendo referring to oral sex. Whether or not Luisa gets the joke, she knows adolescent boors when she meets them and quickly brushes them off. A few days later, however, her husband drunkenly confesses that he's slept with another woman. Devastated, Luisa decides to leave and humiliate him. She calls the boys to say that she will accept their invitation. Flummoxed though they are, the lads eagerly prepare for the trip to their mythical beach. As it turns out, they do find a beach named the Boca del Cielo, a name that will have several ramifications by the time their adventure ends.

Before they arrive at their would-be erotic paradise, they drive into the countryside beyond Mexico City, encountering time and again impoverished Mexicans being pushed around by the police and exploited by the upper class. Our self-absorbed trio, however, glides by, unconcerned with the political plight of the less fortunate. They're far too intent on the sexual politics inside their car. In an attempt to assert herself, Luisa decides to seduce first one boy and then the other. To her rueful amusement, both turn out to be sexually inept. Dedicated masturbators, they're much better at solo performances than duos. Compounding their failure in technique, they become territorial about their companion, screaming at each other over who has rights to her. Only when Luisa threatens to dump them both does their outraged *machismo* settle down. Luisa rewards their newly acquired docility by taking on both at once in a drunken mini-orgy that leaves the boys thoroughly dismayed at the polymorphous nature of their libido. It's feminism triumphant.

I recently criticized *Monster's Ball* for including sex scenes that disrupt the fictional contract between storyteller and audience. Here, too, the actors' nakedness undercuts their performances irremediably. Until Miss Verdú takes off her clothes, she's quite believable as the wronged woman going on an ill-advised spree to spite her loutish hubby. Her credibility disappears, however, with her blouse. Once it is discarded, we can't help noticing she's wearing a pair of silicon-pumped breasts. These biotech marvels hardly comport with her role. Until her husband's confession, she was supposed to be a chaste and loving wife, not a vain tart deploying a sexual arsenal to manipulate the more oafish sex. You just can't help thinking that beneath her stiffened breasts beats an equally unyielding heart.

Luna's and Bernal's nakedness raises a different question. I found myself wondering how old the boys were. The characters they're playing are supposed to be 17. Clothed or unclothed, the actors look no older, and Luna could easily pass for a year or two younger. So, as I watched the film, I couldn't help wondering whether I was witnessing a grown woman molesting minors on camera. (As it turns out, the boys were 20 and 22, respectively, when the film was shot. The spectacle, however, is no less troubling.

Many mainstream critics have pointed out that *Mamá* handles its erotic material with an honesty and naturalness sadly missing from American teen sex comedies. Does this license kids playing kids having sex on screen? How will these young actors behave with women as they grow older? True, Cuaron gives them—and us—plenty of cautions. He pushes all the right political buttons regarding male insensitivity and women's rights and, further, makes sure we understand that sex without loving intimacy leaves its participants lonelier and more confused than they began. But if he's inviting 15-year-olds to his film, he's either a fraud or a fool. In the presence of a naked and willing babe, most young men are far too hormonally disturbed to heed his higher-minded messages. The only discipline they'll abide is that imposed by womanly chastity. Oddly, Cuaron has left this out of his catalog of advice.

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by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

The Man in the Black Hat

From where the boy's wagon was parked, Laramie Peak, which from every other perspective appeared in some degree or another triangular, had a rounded aspect suggesting the crown of a tall, black hat. The wagon stood braced on the summit of a low hill rising from a rolling plain dotted with pale stones and dark clumps of dwarf pine stunted by the thin soil and twisted by the unobstructed wind, with a view extending fully 360 degrees around the distant horizon within whose circle Old Man Redmond's cattle grazed with their heads pointing all in the same direction. On one side of the bunk wagon was a buckboard filled with hay to which a trailing snub rope was tied by one end, on the other, a stack of split pine and cedar wood with a bright-edged ax leaning against it and surrounded by a ring of fresh yellow woodchips. A path, scarcely more than a scratch on the unimpressionable ground, wound out of nowhere from the direction of Laramie Peak, uphill between the rocks to the door of the wagon and past it, headed down again into a green swale where a scattering of the brilliant tiny prairie flowers was already fading.

Iron hooves rang out in the trail as the boy rode up to the buckboard where he dismounted, attached the snap end of the rope to the halter, pulled down the saddle and double blankets, and threw them into the wagon box with the hay. Then he went on to the bunkwagon and pushed in the door, for which there was no key and probably never had been any. He removed his soiled, clay-colored Stetson with the hawk feather stuck into the band and the two bullet holes through the crown and dropped it on the bedroll spread on the bunk bed extending the width of the wagon below the slot window cut into the rear wall. Finally, he reached the whiskey bottle from the cupboard above the bed, unscrewed the top, and took a long drink. "I wish to hell I had me a dog, anyways," the boy said aloud. He had come up short five more animals today, two cow-calf pairs and a yearling heifer.

Over the past three-and-a-half weeks, more than a half-dozen cattle had vanished from the herd, always, so far as the boy could ascertain, overnight. The evening following the first disappearance, he'd taken his horse, bedroll, and rifle and spent the night a couple of miles out from camp at the periphery of the herd, riding among the silent animals until past midnight and sleeping out on the ground with the hobbled horse close by him. Five days later, when Old Man Redmond drove out from McFadden to resupply the camp, the boy had told him about the missing cattle. He'd figured the rancher would be mad as hell, but instead, something strange had happened. Redmond had gone pale under his 60-odd-year-old tan. Then, in a voice unlike his natural one and shaking his withered arm in the boy's face, he'd given him a warning: "Forget about them cows now, if you know what's good for you." Finally, he'd dumped the supplies on the ground beside the foldaway steps at the front of the wagon and driven away in his beat-up Model A Ford pickup without saying another word, never stopping among the herd to have a look around for himself. The boy watched the truck disappear out of sight among the rocks and small trees. Then he shook his head, took a pinch of chew from the tin in his shirt pocket, and sat in the open door of the wagon, looking away across the prairie toward the black high-crowned bulk of Laramie Peak. "First *I* ever knew of a cattleman telling his rider to just forget about the damn cows," he told the horse, standing with its eyes shut and one hoof lifted alongside the buckboard.

Not a week later he was missing two more animals, and when, a couple of days after that, the range detective hired by the Grange rode into camp, he'd told him about it, ignoring Old Man Redmond's order, or advice—whichever it was. The boy had done this for two reasons. One, he felt his job demanded it. Two, Redmond was known to be ailing from a wasting disease the doctors seemed unable to cure and was not expected to live many years more. Aside from the shabby house and tilting outbuildings, plus the relatively little land he held in McFadden, the only property his daughter Andrea stood to inherit from her widowed father were the whiteface cattle the boy had made a living herding the past two summers. Andrea Redmond was 15 years old, a year younger than himself, and very pretty, dark-haired with a high complexion and straight nose like an Indian (though her mother had been a white woman), green eyes with gold lights in them, and a figure like a drawing in the Ladies' Hosiery section of the Sears & Roebuck catalogue. Old Man Redmond, he felt, had no more use for him than he had for anyone else—he was widely suspected of having killed a man, some said an Indian, a dozen or so years before—but dead men aren't consulted in their daughter's choice of a husband. Thus the boy had no intention to let the Redmond herd waste down to nothing, along with its owner, at the hands of the kind of two-bit rustlers that still existed in the country. Just three nights after his conversation with the range detective, he received the first visit from the midnight horsebacker.

He was awakened from a deep sleep by the sound of hooves, which he took at first for the horse having untied itself from the snubbing rope. From the position of the moon, which was approaching the full, he judged the time at around one o'clock. The sound persisted, and he recognized it now for the guided purposeful gait of a horse under saddle coming along the trail toward camp, its hooves ringing out on the hard clay. Instantly, the boy rolled in the sleeping sack to grab the .30-30 lying on the floor beside the bunk bed. Then he sat up on the bed, with his legs still inside the bag and the rifle cocked, staring through the slotted window and listening as the hoof-falls drew closer until they seemed to be just beyond the door. "Why don't the horse nicker?" he wondered, thinking of the mare snubbed close to the buckboard not 20 feet away. The hooves quit, and the

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following silence to him was more profound than the moonlight that seemed its visual manifestation. Then, through the window, a hat appeared, tall, high-crowned, and very black in the moonlight, nothing of a face apparent beneath it but just the dark shadow cast by the forward brim. The hat vanished past the window as quickly as it had appeared there, and instantly afterward a series of sharp raps sounded against the unlocked door of the wagon: one, two, three.

The boy brought the gun up to his shoulder and inserted his finger inside the trigger guard. In the half-dark, he could not see to align the steel sights, but at such range—he told himself—close aim was unnecessary. The knocking—measured, insistent, commanding—came again, and the boy thought to pull the trigger, but did not. Instead, he remained as he was, half in and half out of the bedroll, holding the gun leveled at the door and keeping his eyes on the little window. After an hour or more, he withdrew his legs from the sack and, with the gun still grasped in his right hand and moving as quietly as he could, fixed an iron crowbar against the door. Useless as a doorbar, it would serve at least to waken him if an intruder attempted to break in. Then he returned to the bunk bed and lay in the sleeping sack with the gun across his chest until first light showed through the windows, and the boy fell asleep at last.

In the morning, he searched for tracks outside the wagon and found none, excepting those made by the mare whose double-ought shoes left a faint but distinctive print in the nearly imprintable clay. The boy made himself a breakfast of coffee, pancakes, and bacon cut thick with the bristles left in the rind. Then he saddled up and rode out for a look at the cows, which had drawn together in a drainage where a thread of water still ran after the droughty spring. He didn't need to count them all to tell the cow with the spotted rump and her calf were gone from the herd, but he went ahead and finished anyway.

Leaving the cattle to mill along the banks of the wash, the boy put his spurs to the mare and went loping off across country in the opposite direction from camp. After he'd ridden ten or twelve miles, he came to a narrow canyon thickly wooded in the bottom, where he tied up in a grove of cottonwood trees and climbed up out of the canyon to the washboard road going on to McFadden. He hitched a ride into town with an out-of-work oilpatch roughneck from Casper, got out in front of the saloon, and walked around to the pool hall in back. Mike Simpson was in the middle of a game when the boy showed up, but he apologized to his partner and racked his stick when he learned what was wanted of him. Though two years older and a man already, Mike had been his best friend going on three years now. The two drove together in Mike's Chevy coupe as far as the canyon, where the boy untied the mare and rode hell-bent-for-leather across country, beating the Chevy into camp by nearly a quarter of an hour.

By the time he'd got the cattle together again, it was early evening and time for supper. The boy sliced salt pork into a pan of beans and put the coffeepot on, while Mike looked to the weapons. Besides the .30-30, they had Mike's 12-gauge Remington shotgun, plus plenty of ammunition for both guns. They ate without finding much to say to each other and sat afterward outside the wagon to smoke as the prairie swales filled with shadow and the stars pointed between the gleaming crowns of thunderheads dissipating in an ultraviolet sky. "From here, the Peak looks just exactly like somebody's old black Stetson," Mike observed.

Around ten, they set the crowbar against the door, extinguished the kerosene lantern, and turned in, the boy on the bunk bed, Mike taking the cot kept on hand to offer company. He lay down with the shotgun alongside him and went out like a light, as though expecting to sleep straight through till morning. The boy lay for a while after that, listening to the snoring and trying to keep awake, before he, too, fell asleep.

Then he was awake, all at once and all over, gazing at the oblong of moon-chalked sky and hearing the steady deliberate hoofbeat in the trail. The boy slipped like a snake from the bag, took Mike by the shoulder, and shook him gently awake, ready to cover his mouth with his hand if need be. *"He's coming!"* he said in a fierce whisper. "Don't shoot less'n he comes at us through the door!"

They sat together at the edge of the bunk bed, holding the guns on the door and listening to the hoof-falls approach the wagon. The sound quit suddenly and was followed by a silence unbroken by the creak of leather at the dismount. *"There it is!"* Mike hissed, and, in the instant, the boy saw it too, the tall black hat in silhouette against the pale sky at the horizon, pale as the face that belonged beneath the hat but wasn't. The hat disappeared from the window as suddenly as it had come, and right away the knocking started: Three hard, spaced raps that struck the boy as being as much of a communication as they were a request.

Mike fired with both barrels, the muzzle flashes illuminating the room like lightning as the Number 8 shot ripped through the door panels, letting in tears and splinters of moonshine from the night outside. Numbed by the crashing shots, their nostrils pricking from the scent of cordite, the two of them sat frozen on the bed.

"You killed him," the boy, speaking in a dull voice, said finally.

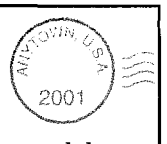
"I never heard him holler." Mike's voice, though stronger, was shaky.

"It ain't no way you could've missed. Better go see how bad hurt he is."

"In the morning I will. I ain't opening that door to Jesus Christ Himself before sunup. If he's still alive . . . well, we'll just have to see, then."

In the morning, they opened the shattered door to find nothing; no body, blood, nor tracks, human or animal. Mike refused the boy's offer of breakfast and left at once for town in the Chevy with his gun. The boy stayed on the range until late September, but the man in the black hat did not visit the camp again and the herd remained intact except for several calves killed by coyotes. By fall, Old Man Redmond's wasting disease was much worse; he died the following January, called by the Sioux Indians the Moon of Frost in the Lodge. Six months after Old Man Redmond's death, the boy and Andrea were married and moved out from town with the cattle into a cabin they built at the edge of the pine woods in the shadow of Laramie Peak. The boy told the story of the man in the black hat to no one except for his wife, but he thought about it off and on, for years to come. After that, he didn't think about it at all anymore.

MOVING?



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